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Ms. 1873.







*Hon. Jno. G. Palmer*  
*As. Rep.*

LETTERS

AND

DISSERTATIONS

UPON

SUNDRY SUBJECTS.

BY

J. C. PICKETT,

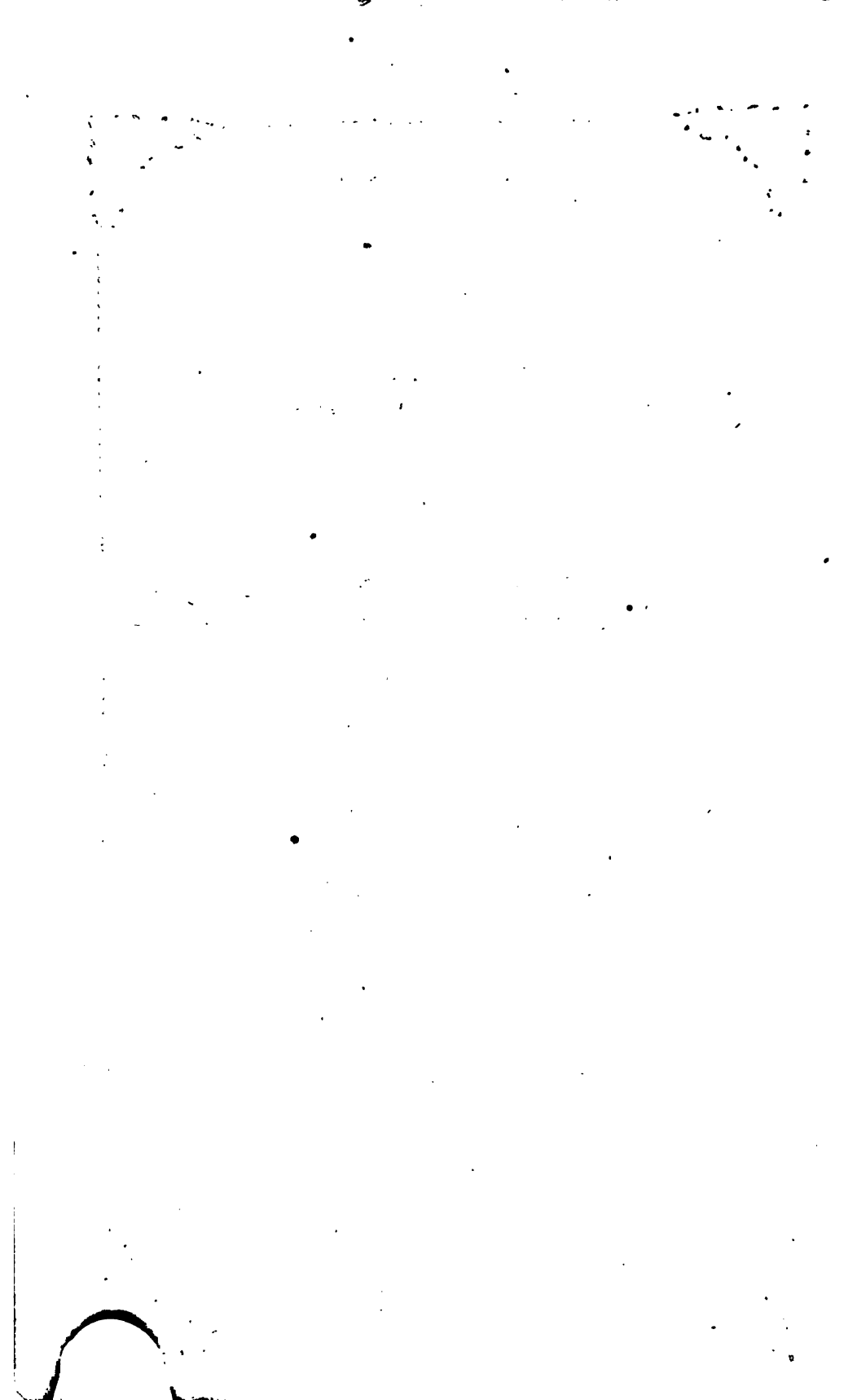
Late Charge' d'Affaires to Peru.

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WASHINGTON:

WILLIAM GREER, PRINTER.

—1848.—



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—1848.—

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1868, April 20.

Capt of Hon. John G. Ralphy.  
(Class of 1818.)

*The following articles have all appeared heretofore in print—  
in Reviews, Newspapers and Pamphlets, with the exception of the  
critique on MR. PRESCOTT'S CONQUEST OF PERU. They are  
now published, with slight alterations, none of which are material,  
however, except that some of them have been shortened—an unde-  
niable improvement.*

WASHINGTON CITY, MAY 25, 1848.



# LETTERS

ADDRESSED TO FRANCIS MARKOE, ESQ., CORRESPONDING SECRETARY OF  
THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE, ON THE PROPOSED CANAL  
ACROSS THE ISTHMUS OF PANAMA.



## LETTER 1.

LIMA, March 5, 1844.

DEAR SIR: I have had the pleasure, not long since, of perusing Mr. WHEATON's letter to you, dated at Berlin, the 15th of July last, and published in the *Intelligencer* of the 19th of August, upon the subject of an artificial communication between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, at or not far from the Isthmus of Panamá. This letter is written with all the ability and perspicuity characteristic of the productions of its distinguished author, and contains more information—in reference to the matter of which it treats—than can be found any where else within the same compass, as I believe. But as Mr. WHEATON has never been at the Isthmus, as I suppose, and has not had an opportunity of making any personal observations, touching the question he discusses, he has underrated, in some degree, probably, the difficulty of making a ship canal to connect the two oceans, and overrated somewhat its importance should it be made.

The idea of a canal across the Isthmus is not a new one. It dates probably from the occupation of the country by the Spaniards, for the *conquistadores*, though neither very enlightend nor very sagacious men about commercial matters, could not fail to be impressed with the advantages that would have resulted to Spanish commerce and to Spanish schemes of conquest, could the obstacle that presented itself to an intercommunication between the two seas have been removed. And the convenience and utility of such an intercommunication was even then more obvious than it is at present. Then voyages from Europe to the Atlantic or Pacific were three times as long as they are in our day, were much more expensive and much more perilous; and there is scarcely anything to be found in the history of human advancement more remarkable, than in the art or science of navigation; and what makes it so remarkable is, that the means and elements are about the same that they were three or four hundred years ago. The old navigators had the magnetic needle as well as the modern ships of nearly the same construction as at present—cordage and canvass but little differ-

ent from that now used, and they were without doubt, as adventurous and as intrepid, as those are, whose "march is o'er the mountain wave" in the present day. And yet, with this identity of means and of appliances, voyages that in the 16th and 17th centuries seemed to be almost interminable, may now be performed in a few days. This cannot be better illustrated than by stating a fact: Even within a hundred years I believe, a voyage from Callao—the port of Lima to Valparaíso, in Chile—sixteen hundred miles—consumed six months of time or more; but now it is accomplished generally in twenty or twenty-five days, and has been in twelve or thirteen. The reason of the difference is, that the old navigators coasted the whole distance against a wind and currents always ahead, and now by standing out to sea some distance, favorable winds are met with. It is said too, that the captain who by his genius or his good luck discovered that the voyage could be made in one-eighth or one-tenth of the usual time was in danger of being brought before the Inquisition—then flourishing here as a "practiser of arts inhibited and out of warrant," and that the Inquisitors who had much more skill in burning heretics than they had in navigation, were with difficulty made to believe that this nautical discovery could have been achieved in any other way than by collusion or compact with the powers of darkness. And thus, the man who in the present day, would have been honored and rewarded as a public benefactor, thought probably that he escaped well by not being consigned to the flames as a wizard or heretic, or as both.

The circumstance that Portobello and Panamá, for many years the two great emporiums for Spanish commerce in South America—the first on the Atlantic, and the other on the Pacific, are not more than sixty or seventy miles apart—though to reach Panamá by sea, it was necessary to sail eight or nine thousand miles further than to reach Portobello—must have made the importance of a water communication between them obvious to the most superficial observer. But nothing was then attempted or even projected in the way of canalizing that I am aware of. However, in the course

of time, men began to speculate earnestly upon the subject, then to project and then to propose. Some years ago, I saw a memorial in manuscript from a British subject, to the viceroy of New Granada, dated about the year 1787, I think, proposing to make a canal across the Isthmus. I have forgotten the name of the memorialist, as well as the fate of his memorial. It received neither encouragement nor notice probably, though, had the author of the project, proposed to discover the *El Dorado*, his proposition would have been favorably received, I have no doubt.

Nearly fifty years ago, the Prince of the Peace, Don MANUEL GODOY contemplated—so he says in his memoirs—the making of a canal across the Isthmus of Nicaragua, through the lake of that name, from the gulf of Papagayo, to the river San Juan, which empties into the Atlantic, and although, this was not to be a ship canal, still for a Spanish statesman of that period, the idea was a very brilliant conception, in a country too, where a deliberative assembly—the Council of Castile—once solemnly resolved—so it is said, though libellously it may be—that it was an impious contravention of the purposes of the Almighty to make canals or improve river navigation, as He had already placed rivers and streams, where it was His pleasure they should be.

MR. WHEATON mentions five routes as enumerated by BARON HUMBOLDT, by which an artificial communication might be opened between the two oceans—1st, across the Isthmus of Tehuantepec; 2d, across the Isthmus of Nicaragua; 3d, across the Isthmus of Panama; 4th, across the Isthmus of Darien, and 5th, across the Isthmus dividing the river Atrato falling into the Atlantic and the river Choco falling into the Pacific.

I do not believe that any traveller, explorer or projector has ever proposed any route for a canal, except one of the five I have just mentioned, and in fact, there exists no other, I believe, which could even be considered possible, to use the word applied to them in general by MR. WHEATON, and he distinctly abandons them all as being impracticable I infer, except two, for there is, he says, “no other choice than between the Isthmus of Nicaragua and the Isthmus of Panama, as the medium of canal communication between the two oceans.” And if he here means a ship canal, he might have gone further in my opinion, and have said that there was no other choice than the Isthmus of Panama. The routes by Tehuantepec, by Darien and by the Atrato are entirely out of the question. Nothing more need be said, therefore about them at present, and I will proceed to state a few facts about the Nicaragua route, to shew that it too presents insurmountable difficulties to the making of a ship canal, though not to a common boat canal perhaps, with four or five feet of water. These facts are—that lake Nicaragua is 125 feet higher than the Pacific, about sixteen miles distant from it, and that an expensive tunnel, as well as much expensive lockage would be necessary, and a tunnel would not answer for a ship canal as it would be almost impossible to give it the requisite dimensions so as to make it of the necessary height. Then the river San Juan from the

lake to the Atlantic is seventy-nine miles in length—abounds in rapids, rocks and shallows, and could not be made available, except as a feeder for a canal.

MR. STEPHENS, in his work on Central America, estimates the cost of an ordinary canal through lake Nicaragua, at, from twenty to twenty-five millions of dollars, and it may be safely assumed that a ship canal of the same length over the same ground would cost one hundred millions at least, supposing no tunnel to be necessary. I will here remark, that when I speak of a ship canal, I mean one that has twenty feet of water or thereabouts. One of less depth would not fully answer the purpose of a connecting link between the two oceans, and this is the usual depth of ship canals.

Upon the supposition, therefore, that there cannot be found either individuals or companies, or governments infatuated enough to attempt the construction of a canal, that would cost one hundred millions of dollars, and that certainly would not yield two per cent per annum on the outlay, I arrive at the conclusion, that for a ship canal, the Nicaragua route is out of the question, and that there remains none to be considered with a view to any practical purpose, except the one across the Isthmus of Panama.

The Panama route seems to have been the favorite one of late years, and to it nearly all the explorers and projectors have turned their attention; and with reason, for it presents facilities and advantages for a canal, not to be found any where else on the continent—that is, for a canal connecting the two seas. The governments of Colombia and New Granada have granted three or four charters for a canal or rail-road across the Isthmus, and they have all been forfeited I believe without a single stroke being struck with a view to their construction. The charters seem to have been obtained for no purpose but that of speculation, the object of the grantees being to sell their grant for the most they could get, and although none of them realized fortunes by the sale, yet some of them succeeded in raising the wind to a limited extent. Among them, the BARON THIERRY was perhaps the most successful, as I have understood, that he got a considerable sum from MR. SALOMON and others, who seem to have purchased in good faith, and with the view of accomplishing the work of an intercommunication in the manner stipulated in the grant to the Baron. But they did nothing, their error being the common one, of underrating the magnitude and difficulties of the enterprise, as every body does who has not a pretty accurate knowledge of South America and of the South Americans, and some with this knowledge even come to strange conclusions as they seem to me, about the feasibility and facility of making the ship canal in question.

Of BARON THIERRY, I have heard it said, that he was an intelligent, honorable man, and was nothing worse than a visionary of good intentions; but such a man of all others, would be the most unfit for constructing a canal across the Isthmus. Some have insinuated too, that his intellects were a little clouded, but plain, practical, matter-of-fact men, who

cannot perceive that two and two make more than four, are rather addicted to sneering at those who happen to be more perspicacious than themselves. Abandoning the Isthmus, the Baron went to New Zealand, of which he proclaimed himself the king, and about the first use he made of sovereign power, was to have engraved a dashing coat of arms, which was, I fancy, among the most imposing of the insignia of his royalty. MR. WHEATON speaks of him as an adventurer, which he was without doubt, but not in the worst sense of the word probably.

The facility with which grants have been obtained from the Granadian government for making roads and canals across the Isthmus has had a bad effect, and has no doubt retarded the work, if ever it is to be undertaken seriously and in good faith by responsible persons, able and willing to comply with their engagements. That government has shewn much liberality, though, but little sagacity. Its practice has been to grant an exclusive privilege referring to steam navigation, to rail-roads or canals to any person asking for it. Twenty years ago, in the time of GENERAL BOLIVAR, charters were granted for the exclusive navigation by steamboats of nearly all the navigable rivers in Colombia, and yet there is not at this day a single boat running on those rivers. For a short time, there was one on the Magdalena, but it was destroyed during the recent civil war in New Granada, and has not been replaced. It has been stated lately, in the English newspapers, that the BARINGS have undertaken to construct a ship canal through the Isthmus—that it is to be completed within five years—that MR. ELLET is the engineer—that he will bring from Europe four or five thousand Irish and Germans to do the work—that the length of the canal will be forty-eight and a half miles, the depth of water twenty feet, &c., &c.

This is the statement with some further particulars, and it is given with such staggering circumstantiality, that it would seem to be capacious and ultra incredulity to question the truth of it, and yet, I cannot help considering it altogether apocryphal, with the superadded fact even, that MR. ARAGO is asserted to have made the statement to some scientific body in Paris. I doubt, because I do not think the BARINGS are the men to embark in such a stupendous undertaking, without first knowing exactly or nearly so, what the cost will be, and what the revenue, and these at present can be only conjectured, for I doubt, whether an estimate can be made, that would be even a tolerable approximation to the truth. As far as I am informed, there has not yet been executed anything like a satisfactory survey and estimate. Surveys and estimates have been made, so far as to ascertain the practicability of a ship canal in the opinion of the surveyor, and so far they may be satisfactory, but no further, and the engineer who would undertake such a work upon the mere ascertained practicability of it, would in all probability ruin his employers, and lose his professional reputation. The engineer, when deciding that a canal can be made over the Isthmus, will have performed only the least difficult and least responsible part

of his task. He must estimate the expense, and the danger is that he will vastly underrate it, if not perfectly acquainted with the innumerable and almost insuperable difficulties attending such works in South America. In Europe and the United States, the character of the ground being known, the cost of labor and of materials, &c., a skillful engineer might estimate pretty accurately the cost of the canal, though even in those countries with abundant data, great mistakes are sometimes made. At the Isthmus, the danger of miscalculating would be ten times as great, for it would be necessary to take into consideration elements and circumstances to which there is nothing analogous in Europe and the United States, and to make allowances and additions for which, unless he were *au fait*, he would not perceive the necessity, and yet, if they were not made, the estimate would be very fallacious and imperfect.

The Caledonian ship canal in Scotland is about twenty-two miles in length—the excavated part—and cost about four and a half million of dollars. It has twenty feet of water, and a canal across the Isthmus should not have less. The length of the latter may be assumed to be about fifty miles—I will say two and a half times the length of the Caledonian. The cost therefore at the same rate would be eleven millions two hundred and fifty thousand dollars. But to calculate it at the same rate would be committing a most egregious mistake.—Three times the cost, mile for mile, would not be too much, and I incline to the opinion that this, extravagant as it may seem to be, would be more likely to be under than over the actual expenditure. I do not believe that a ship canal of the usual dimensions could be completed at a much less cost than forty millions of dollars. Yet I have seen a French estimate that put it at six or seven millions, and none has been made, I believe, that carries it as high as I have done. I proceed to say why I think it will be so enormously expensive.

I assume in the first place, that nearly all the labor of every kind must be done by European laborers. I have seen it asserted in an English periodical, that a thousand native laborers could be easily had in the Isthmus at two dollars per week. This I cannot believe. On the contrary, I doubt whether one hundred could be had even at a higher price, and at no price would they do more than half the labor that Europeans would, until these became enervated by the climate and by the many relaxing elements by which they would be surrounded. The population in the Isthmus is neither dense nor numerous, although the country has been three hundred years in the possession of a christian and civilized people, and is not by any means a sterile one. Still much of it is yet a primeval forest unpenetrated and almost impenetrable. Within a mile of Panama, a town of eight or ten thousand inhabitants, wild deer are frequently killed, and tigers and other ferocious occupants of the forest prowl *ad libitum*, in the neighborhood.—The people are poor but they are independent. They have but few wants and those few are easily supplied. They are not particularly fond of labor and no body works very hard,

except the boatmen on the river Chagres, and the porters who ply between Panama and the town of Cruces, conveying heavy burdens on their backs, and these are not occupied more than half their time. Their wants, I have said, are few. The climate clothes them almost entirely, for they require but little in the way of raiment. They need but little fuel and that is at hand, and the earth furnishes them almost spontaneously with food. With a little meat, a good deal of red pepper, rice, plantains and chocolate they fare sumptuously; and were they reduced to plantains alone, they would still have the same food, upon which millions of their countrymen subsist almost exclusively. This edible—the plantain—is the real bread fruit, the very different vegetable production so called, being misnamed. The plantain is more palatable, more nutritious, and in all respects a better substitute for bread. Its botanical name—*musa paradisiaca*, is indicative of its excellence, being supposed by some theologians to have been the fruit

“Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste,  
Brought death into the world, and all our woe.”

The other is a tolerable succedaneum for the staff of life, it is true, but has continued like other pretenders to carry off the palm due to superior merit. A plantain patch or garden when once made, perpetuates itself with very little labor, and furnishes a perennial supply of savory and wholesome aliment. Humboldt calculates that a given quantity of ground will produce 133 times the weight of plantains that it will of wheat, and 44 times the weight that it will yield of potatoes, and though, I think this estimate may be rather too favorable to the plantain, still the difference is very great. Professor Pærrig, a learned German, who travelled through Peru, thirteen or fourteen years ago, states that in that part of the country lying towards the river Amazon, plantains enough could be bought for one *cuartillo* (three cents and one-eighth) to subsist five men one day, and that a day's labor was valued at twenty-five cents. Consequently, with the product of one day's labor, a man might purchase food for forty days, which seems to be reducing human subsistence to its lowest minimum, if such a phrase is allowable. And the wonder is increased, when it is considered that the real cost of the production of that quantity of plantains may not exceed one half of the price.

Returning from this digression, I will observe that I do not think laborers can be had in the Isthmus to dig a canal, and if they could be, they would demand high wages, do but little work, and not do that well. It would be a kind of labor of which they have had no experience. But few of the laborers of the Isthmus have even seen I suppose the tools that would be used. In saying all this, I speak understandingly, having some knowledge of the South Americans, and hazard not much in saying, that in all the warm country, (*tierra caliente*) though the laboring classes have their virtues as well as the higher, that of application to severe toil, for the sake of gain is not among those virtues—if it is a virtue. Every thing is done *poco a poco* as the phrase is; that is, very leisurely. And there is a saying,

*quien quiere matarse trabajando?*—Who is going to kill himself with work?—which, though quite philosophic, is at the same time rather ominous.

Laborers cannot be had either, in any part of South America, to go to the Isthmus, to dig on the canal, although, in some of the countries labor is extremely low. The South American laborer is but little migratory in his disposition. He scarcely ever goes in search of employment beyond his own country—labor is a commodity, of which, he has always a plenty at home, and he does not require a very large supply. If the canal is ever made, it will be done by Irishmen probably, and it would be well for them, could they be made to understand all the difficulties they will have to encounter in the Isthmus, which are more numerous and formidable than they, in their ignorance, can anticipate—a debilitating and not healthy climate, excessive heat and excessive rains and a disease—engendering occupation. Should the canal be commenced, and should the Irish (or other Europeans) come as laborers to Panama, great attention must be paid to their habits and to their comforts, and it ought to be understood at once, that the same amount of labor is not expected of them that would be at home. If it should be, they will soon sink under the effort, and will make the discovery—though, too late perhaps, that potatoes and Agitation in Ireland, are preferable to typhus and dysentery in the Isthmus, though with high wages annexed. This I say, not to discourage but to premonish. With due precaution, inviolable temperance in every particular, and moderate labor, there will not be probably much danger from the incursion of disease; but without them, it is inevitable.

It will be proper, whilst estimating the cost of a ship canal through the Isthmus, at three or four times that of the Caledonian canal, to give some further reasons for this apparently extravagant estimate. This is easily done.—We will suppose that laborers can be obtained in Europe. I do not think they can be anywhere in America. Their passage across the Atlantic must be paid, which will be a considerable item. Their wages must necessarily be high—the double at least of what would be paid them in Europe. Allowing four of five months annually for the rain, during which the work of excavation must be suspended, and for occasional cessation from labor, on account of the fierce and insupportable heat of a tropical sun, it may be fairly assumed that the laborer will not perform in the course of the year as much work as he could perform in Europe in one half the time. And the workmen cannot be discharged during the rainy season, as they would be in Europe in the winter. They must be paid something, and must be kept together during the long recess occasioned by bad weather, for if they once separate and scatter, they can never be collected together again. Many would fall victims to their imprudence, and many become converts to the anti-laboring principle through the relaxing influence of the climate and the irresistible contagion of example.

To this it may be added—that much of the pro-

visions and supplies of all kinds must be brought from the United States or from Europe, and at a great expense probably, and even a part of the materials to be used in the construction of the canal perhaps. Although timber abounds in the Isthmus, yet I am not sure that it will not be advisable to bring lumber from the United States, so great would be the expense of preparing it in a country where there are no saw-mills, no labor-saving machinery, no mechanical contrivances, and no intelligent and skillful mechanics. These could all be procured from abroad, it is true, but it would be at a great expense.

I have stated facts enough to prove I think, that the construction of a ship canal across the Isthmus will be a very difficult and expensive work—vastly more so than will be supposed by those who, not having a personal knowledge of the country and of the surrounding circumstances, consider nothing but the distance which is not great; and hearing that there is not much elevation to be overcome, cannot conceive why it should be so costly. But there is no mystery in the matter to those who have passed over the ground, and paid some attention to the subject in a spirit of calm and dispassionate enquiry, without enthusiasm or prepossession. Indeed, I consider the estimate of the cost that I have made rather a low one.

I will now say something about the practicability of the canal, the most eligible route, &c., &c.

A skillful engineer would encounter no great difficulty I apprehend, in finding a suitable route for the canal. English engineers have already decided that it exists, and one can be selected probably on which there will be no very great elevations to be overcome—a great desideratum—for should there be much lockage, it will add enormously to the expense and might be fatal to the enterprise. It is doubtful, from the physical character of the country, whether the small rivers and streams among the hills could be made available as feeders to the canal. I say *hills*, because at the Isthmus, the Andes cease to be mountains, and there is, as stated by Mr. WHEATON, a complete discontinuity of the chain.

There are low narrow valleys, not much elevated above the two oceans, through which the canal could be conducted I suppose, without any very great deviations from a straight course—the distance not exceeding fifty miles or thereabouts. The hills of the Isthmus are decidedly unfavorable to canalling I think. They are mostly isolated, rocky and precipitous, and must be avoided, therefore, as I suppose they can be.

To decide upon the two termini of the canal will be a little difficult, but the subject will present I apprehend, no obstacles that will be found to be insuperable. Chagres will not answer for the Atlantic terminus for want of a sufficient depth of water, and for this there is no remedy. Another terminating point must be sought for, therefore, and it can be found I have been informed, as Mr. WHEATON says, not far from Chagres, though it will be difficult to find one I think free from all objection. The coast at and about that place is low and marshy, and extremely favorable to the generation of miasmatic effluvia.

On the Pacific side there are two points, one of which would be selected probably for the terminus—the city of Panama and a large village five or six leagues distant called Chorrera. The former ought to be preferred without doubt I think, if a sufficiency of water can be obtained. Panama is an ancient town—was once populous, opulent and flourishing, and it is difficult to contemplate her now, shorn of her wealth, decayed and decaying, her population reduced to one third of what it has been, without feeling some sympathy for the inhabitants. The town is thought abroad to be very unhealthy and is rather so, but not so decidedly as to render its insalubrity a very serious objection to the canal terminating at it. One of the scourges of the tropics, the yellow fever is almost unknown and with some amelioration of the police would be entirely, as I believe, being a non-contagionist. The stream called Rio Grande, mentioned by Mr. WHEATON, falls into the Pacific just out side of the town, and might be made somewhat available in constructing a canal, for when the tide is in, it forms a creek of considerable depth—deep enough to float large vessels. In the year 1838, I was four days on the river Chagres, ascending it to Cruces, 21 miles from Panama, and from my observation, I am disposed to believe that Mr. WHEATON has overrated its volume of water and its depth which, he says, varies from twenty-two to thirty feet. But this is not material, as I do not believe much use—if any—can be made of the river in conjunction with a canal from sea to sea, except as a feeder. Canals are often carried along rivers, on their very banks, but do not often enter them but at the terminus, and there seems to be not less truth than professional enthusiasm in the reply made by the celebrated engineer, BRINDLEY, to the question propounded to him in the House of Commons—“What do you consider to be the use of rivers?” To which he answered—“To feed navigable canals.” This was said eighty years ago, when canalling was in its infancy in England, but experience has shewn that BRINDLEY, though a self-taught engineer, was pretty correct in his opinion, for rarely I believe, has a river been made directly part and parcel of a canal.

It was long a popular idea, though never entertained I suppose by scientific men, that the Pacific at Panama was considerably elevated above the Atlantic at Chagres, and the assumed inequality has been mentioned as likely to interpose an obstacle to the construction of a canal across the Isthmus. “This opinion” says Mr. WHEATON, was long since contested by BARON VON HUMBOLDT, and his conclusions have recently been confirmed by the actual observation of Mr. LLOYD, made with the greatest accuracy and care in 1828–29, by order of GENERAL BOLIVAR.”

Once in every twelve hours the Pacific is certainly higher than the Atlantic, in consequence of the tide rising to a much greater height at Panama than at Chagres; and once in every twelve, it is lower too. Mr. WHEATON explains this fully. The tide rises sometimes to twenty feet at Panama—to twenty-five, it is said, but this I doubt: At Chagres, not more than a foot and a half, and consequently at high tide the Pacific will be from eight to ten feet

higher than the Atlantic, and at the end from eight to ten lower or thereabouts. And this, I conceive to be the whole secret of the inequality, so much talked about, so little understood, and of so little importance as an impediment to the making of a canal.

The great question is, after all—Who is to make the ship canal across the Isthmus? To me it appears to be a work of too great magnitude to be undertaken and completed by any individual or association of individuals, unless I am hugely mistaken in my estimate of the cost. Nor do I believe that any great capitalist would think of undertaking it—certainly not with the present limited amount of information we possess with respect to the practicability of the work, its cost and its utility. It may be assumed to be practicable I suppose; but I am of opinion that no living engineer could estimate the cost of it within five millions of dollars, for that must depend much upon contingencies occurring during the progress of the work.

The canal ought to be an international work to the construction of which all the nations of Christendom having an interest in it should contribute on the *pro rata* principle, or the United States, England and France might make it, and generously allow the whole world to use it without tax or toll. This with their abundant resources, they might afford to do, should it cost as much even as fifty or sixty millions of dollars. But, that it will be understood by any international association, may be desired, and may be hoped for, but can scarcely be expected. Nations often coalesce and combine to oppress and to plunder, though they rarely unite for any benevolent and useful purpose.

If the peace of the world or of Christendom could be perpetuated, then the commercial powers would not hesitate probably, to co-operate in so magnificent a work as the canal. But as this cannot be, there is not much prospect that any but the most powerful nations, will co-operate in it—even should they do so; for in the event of a maritime war, New Granada being weak and unable to make herself respected by unscrupulous belligerents, it is tolerably certain, that the strongest naval power would seize the Isthmus and the canal both together, and place the latter in a state of occlusion against all the world except her own subjects and her allies. The strongest power for the next thirty or forty years will be France and Great Britain probably—afterwards, the United States, and at the end of one hundred years, with our 150 millions of inhabitants at least, we, or rather the 150 millions our posterity, if inclined to make conquests, can invade Europe, carrying with them the blessing of religious toleration, equal laws, free institutions and sound and liberal principles of government. And in much less than one hundred years, we will dictate if necessary, just principles of international law, paying no regard to Holy Alliances, Quintuple Alliances, or alliances of any kind. Farewell then! a long farewell to paper blockades; orders in council, the right of Impressment and the right of Search. All these will not only have ceased to exist but cease to be named.

SPAIN when she was mistress of her colonies in America, ought to have made a ship canal across the Isthmus, and she could easily have done so, for the sum necessary to accomplish it would have been but a small item in the almost countless millions she wasted in butcherly and ruinous wars during the reign of two of her sovereigns—the emperor CHARLES THE FIFTH and PHILIP THE SECOND. And this might have been done too without subtracting a single dollar from the official remittances to Europe. A tithe of the vast sums dedicated to the building of churches and convents in Spanish America would have defrayed the whole expense. And now the greatest portion of these expensive edifices are decayed and decaying, and in a state of ominous dilapidation. Their fate will be, to crumble into heaps of ruins and rubbish most assuredly not to be rebuilt, whereas a canal, besides being a work of immense utility and creditable to the people who make it, would not only outlast these useless structures, the convents, but the Coliseum and Pyramids even, for when they would be nothing more than mounds of dust or of shapeless stone, the canal would be growing in importance as it grew in age, and no accident would be likely to destroy it but such a one as would destroy the Isthmus itself.

The non-improving character of the Spaniards has left its impress but too visibly throughout South America. There is scarcely a road that deserves the name in all the country, and there are no canals except here and there a ditch bearing the name of canal, of but little extent and none that are completed humble and unpretending as they are. In the immediate neighborhood of the cities and large towns, some pretty substantial stone bridges are to be found “few and far between,” and yet there is no country where roads and bridges are more necessary. The Spaniards who conquered the country were devoted to religion and war—consequently they built churches and fortresses; the fashion and the uses of which having passed away they now cumber the ground as monuments of a short-sighted and semi-barbarous policy. When I say *religion*, I mean the superstition of that day.

It is a remarkable fact, that the heathen sovereigns of Peru—the Incas—did more during the three or four centuries, they governed the country, in the way of road making and canalizing—the latter for the purposes of irrigation—than the civilized christians who succeeded them have done during the three hundred years of their iron domination. And there are still existing vestiges of better roads that were constructed by the ancient Peruvians than can be found at this day, any where in South America. I do not include Mexico, which is in North America, where something more has been done in the line of “internal improvements,” than in any other part of the Spanish dominions on this continent.

The South American States too, had they, when they threw off the Spanish yoke, settled down into quiet, peaceable, unambitious republics, as the friends of human liberty, after their long, eventful, and sanguinary struggle, hoped they would, might have made the canal in question, by contributing an inconsiderable

portion of the sums they have squandered during the last twenty years, upon their senseless, deplorable, destructive, and apparently endless conflicts—waged nine cases out of ten, for no conceivable and for no ostensible purpose even, than to decide whether General *This* or General *That*, shall be intrusted with supreme and irresponsible executive power. It would not be an extravagant estimate to suppose that, within the last twenty years, not less than four hundred millions of dollars have been wasted by the new republics upon their domestic feuds, leaving their debts and the interest on them unpaid, and in the meantime no public work of consequence has been either undertaken or completed. This is greatly to be deplored. I, as a friend of the country, deplore it, but must content myself with hoping for, rather than of expecting, better times.

I will now make a few remarks about the importance and value of a ship canal across the Isthmus to the commercial world. That they will be great is incontestable, but still it does not strike me that they will be quite equal to what Mr. WHEATON, and others suppose. It will be of great use without doubt, but its utility will be vastly diminished should the canal be constructed with a view to its being a remunerating property, and for this reason it should be made by a government or by governments, that would not look to it as a source of revenue, and who would permit it to be used free of charge or nearly so. If owned by individuals they must have a fair interest on their investment which would be five per cent per annum at least; and in addition to this, the expense of superintendence, administration and repairs, would be very considerable. All of this put together would, it is to be apprehended, make the charges on vessels passing through, so enormous, that it would be found, in many cases, the best economy to send them round Cape Horn. But this obstacle would be more serious at first than afterwards, and would be less in the way as commerce increased and expanded, and might finally disappear, not during the present century however.

HUMBOLDT says: as quoted by Mr. WHEATON, that "when a canal of communication shall connect the two oceans, the productions of Nootka Sound and of China, will be brought nearer to Europe and the United States, by more than two thousand leagues. Then, and then only, will mighty changes be effected in the political state of Oriental Asia; for this narrow tongue of land, (the Isthmus of Panama) against which the waves of the Atlantic have so long beat in vain, has been for ages the bulwark of the independence of China and Japan."

This was written thirty-five years ago, and I am obliged to believe that if the celebrated and illustrious author was about to make his remarks now, he would undoubtedly qualify somewhat the concluding member of the sentence, for recent events (the Opium War) have shewn clearly enough, that the "independence" of China has not found a "bulwark" in the Isthmus. "The narrow tongue of land" still exists in all its geographical and geological integrity, unviolated by the pickaxe or spade, and yet in the meantime, the independence of

China has come to be a very debatable question. She is independent in theory perhaps, but not in fact, or she never would have made peace as she did, on the humiliating conditions dictated by the British Government which gave the pacification much more the appearance of a capitulation than of a treaty. A nation can scarcely be called independent, that submits to have a peace dictated to it at the cannon's mouth. Such independence is but nominal.—And as regards Japan, although it may seem presumptuous in me to dissent from any opinion expressed by HUMBOLDT and adopted by Mr. WHEATON, yet I am obliged to believe, that the independence of that empire does not now and never did depend in any manner, upon the condition of the Isthmus. The Japanese owe the preservation of their independence it appears to me, to their laws and institutions, to the indomitable character of the people, and above all to the inhospitable and unrelaxing rigor with which strangers are excluded from the country. These constitute the "bulwark," of Japanese independence, which, were the English to get a footing in Japan, would ere long be numbered among the things that have been, though the Isthmus might be a hundred times as broad and as impregnable as it is.

I will particularize a little about the charges on vessels passing through the canal to be or not to be constructed. Should the tolls be high as it is to be feared for the reasons given above, then it may be assumed I think, that not less than one half of the vessels bound to the Pacific would go by the Cape, particularly those going to Chile; to Peru; to the southern parts of Polynesia, and to portions of Australia. All the whaling ships—between four and five hundred, would be apt to take that route from motives of economy. And the fact, as I conceive it to be that half of the vessels navigating the Pacific will be excluded from the benefits of the canal, will be a powerful reason why the work should be an international one, if it is possible for the nations to lay aside for once their distrust and their jealousies and animosities, and to unite cordially in an undertaking that will reflect great glory upon those who accomplish it, and confer upon mankind a signal and lasting benefit.

Supposing the canal to cost no more than thirty millions of dollars—a very low estimate I think—then to secure a remunerating dividend, not less than two millions must be collected, and this would require two thousand vessels to pass annually, paying on an average one thousand dollars each, which is a large number of ships and a high toll. At present, this number would not pass—not the half of it probably.

One effect the canal would certainly have, I suppose—it would resuscitate the city of Panama, and bring back to it a part of the commercial prosperity which it has lost. It would probably, make too, the Isthmus a flourishing and populous country; now it is neither one nor the other. This would be doing some good undoubtedly, but on a limited scale, whilst the expenditures which achieved it would be most certainly very great. Great numbers of the Europeans emigrating to the Isthmus as laborers, would settle there perma-

nently. They would be mostly Irish probably, and would be a great acquisition to that region, and in time make it a kind of New Hibernia. They would be obliged to forego the potato, but would find an excellent substitute for it in the plantain which is not inferior to it as an esculent and is much easier cultivated. \*

So far I have considered an artificial communication through the Isthmus with reference to a ship canal; but it is susceptible of being viewed under a variety of aspects. All sorts of communications have been suggested and proposed. One plan is to connect the river Chagres with the Pacific by a common boat canal. I doubt the expediency of this project. The best route would be the one mentioned by Mr. WHEATON, commencing at the river Trinity, which empties into the Chagres, and carry it through a tolerably level country towards Panama or Chorrera. On this route I do not think much lockage would be required. Light steamers or other boats could ascend the river to the canal at all seasons and thus keep the navigation in constant activity. To make a canal from Cruces, to Pana-

\* Since this was written, in consequence of what is called the *rot*, it has become a problem whether in future the Irish potato can be relied upon safely as a staple article of food. To the Irish, of all the people of the world, this is a question of great and literally of vital importance, for upon this vegetable, one half of them at least depend almost exclusively for food. Should it fail, what can be done? There is no other productions known that can be cultivated successfully so far north, that will yield the same quantity of food from a given quantity of ground. Indian corn comes nearest to it, but will not; oats and barley the next nearest, will not—so that let the anti-Malthusians say what they please, and dream what they please, here is a country whose population has far outstripped its means of subsistence. But say these utopian economists—Mr. Allison and the rest; that the soil of Ireland is capable of producing food for double the present population, which I much doubt; but the important fact at present is, that it does not produce near enough for the existing eight millions, and whilst these able and ingenious writers (they are really so) are proving that there *might* be double the food needed, the inhabitants are dying of starvation by tens of thousands.

Now could a million, or a half million, or one hundred thousand of the Irish be transplanted to the Isthmus of Panama, it would be a blessing to them and a benefit to mankind. They could make the great canal, if it can be made, and the Isthmus now a wilderness, submitted to Irish intelligence and Irish energy, would become a productive and flourishing and beautiful country, while it never will be whilst in the exclusive possession of the present race of occupants. But these would be benefitted too. They should not be dispossessed or oppressed, or wronged in any way. Example and emulation would stimulate them to exertion, and in time they would become an industrious and an enterprising people, which at present they cannot be said to be.—But all this is dreamy and utopian too.

ma, I consider to be but little short of impracticable. The rocky, hilly character of the country for more than half the distance forbids it. There could not be either earth or water found in sufficient quantity, or in the right places. It might possibly be done by making a terminus at Gorgona, two miles below Cruces, but this I much doubt.

Another project, is a railroad from the Trinity river or from Gorgona to Panama. This, I consider rather more promising, if the road could be made on pretty good terms, and as a route might be found I think, that would not require much grading, possibly it might be.—But great care ought to be observed in making the surveys and estimates, and nothing ought to be attempted until every possible expense is ascertained by engineers of unquestionable competency and integrity, and then ten per centum ought to be added for contingencies. We know how fallacious estimates of this kind sometimes turn out to be in the United States, where it is much easier to obtain the requisite data. The danger that they will be erroneous and deceptive, is much greater in South America.

The last and most humble as well as the most practicable and cheapest project, is to make a good carriage road from the Trinity or from Gorgona to Panama. This might be done at a comparatively small expense, and if no very great good resulted from it, there would be no very great sacrifice of time or of capital. But this road, if not raised above the general level of the valley over which it would be carried, would be under water during a part of the rainy season.

I will here remark, though out of place, that as far as my knowledge extends, ship canals have not in any case yielded a fair remunerating profit on the investment. The Caledonian canal is scarcely kept in repair from the receipts, and I do not think that the Amsterdam and Nieuwediep canal is found to be profitable. The Welland canal in Canada is not. But this is scarcely a ship canal, having only eight and a half feet of water, and vessels of more than one hundred and twenty-five tons burden do not pass. The Delaware and Raritan canal has not met the public expectation either as regards receipts, they falling far short of what were anticipated. The Louisville canal in Kentucky, is doing better I believe than any of them, but it is on a small scale, being only between one and two miles in length, and justifies no inferences in favor of great and expensive works. It can scarcely be called a ship canal either, as steamboats only pass through it, some of them of considerable burden it is true, but all perhaps drawing but little water in comparison with their tonnage.

I now conclude this very long and desultory letter, which is as much a dissertation upon matters and things in general, as upon a ship canal through the Isthmus. What I have written has not been written with a view to discourage anybody who may be disposed to embark in that glorious, yet to my thinking, rather uncertain and perilous enterprise of making a ship canal. My object is to promote enquiry and investigation, for considering how much has been said and written about connecting the two oceans by an artificial communica-



tion, there is still to this day a singular and lamentable deficiency of accurate and minute information in relation to it. I do not possess enough myself by three-fourths, to warrant my scribbling, but seeing that sundry persons not much better informed than myself have written upon it very learnedly, lucidly and entertainingly, I flatter myself that I do not commit any unpardonable impertinence in making public my crude speculations.

I am with high respect,

Your obedient servant,

J. C. PICKETT.

FRANCIS MARKOE, Jr., Esq.,  
Cor. Sec. of the Nat. Institute.

## LETTER II.

Lima, April 13, 1848.

DEAR SIR: Since writing to you on the 5th ultimo, on the subject of a ship canal across the Isthmus of Panama, I have been informed by M. MARESCHAU, the French Chargé d'Affaires to Bolivia, now here—that two skilful engineers despatched by the French government, are now engaged at the Isthmus, in making surveys and examinations, with the view of deciding upon the practicability of a canal, the expense of its construction, &c., &c. From the well-known skill and activity of French engineers, it may be presumed that the task assigned to those gentlemen will be promptly and faithfully executed. The danger is, that unless they possess already some knowledge of Spanish America and of the Spanish Americans, they will be apt to underrate the difficulties to be encountered in the progress of the work, on account of the heat of the climate, rains, disease, &c., and consequently make an entirely too low estimate of the cost of the work.

Not long ago, an article appeared in the *Journal des Debats*, (Paris) stating that two engineers were about to proceed to the Isthmus of Panama, for the purpose of ascertaining the best route for a canal. They are the same no doubt mentioned above.

The author of this article decides unhesitatingly, that a canal is practicable, but asserts that for a "maritime canal," there are only three "possible" routes—the Isthmus of Panama, of Nicaragua and Darien. If by a maritime canal, he means a ship canal, as without doubt he does, then he might have excluded the two last, unless he intends to give to the word *possible*, a very broad and comprehensive signification. The aggregated disposable cash of Europe might suffice, perhaps, to make such a canal along the Nicaragua route, and I doubt if much less would do it. Or if the author means a mere common boat canal, he might have assumed the number of routes to be five, as Mr. WHEATON has done. But a common canal, although it might be of great use to the country through which it would pass, would not much facilitate general commerce, of which the writer seems to be aware; for "there is not much to be expected," he says, "of a canal, unless constructed in such a manner, that vessels sailing from London, from Bordeaux or New York, may continue their voyage to the Pacific, as far as Lima, Aca-

"pulco or Canton. A transshipment would occasion the loss of precious time, and merchandise would incur the risk of loss and of being pillaged, in regions like the Isthmus, where the notions of *meum* and *tuum* are rather loose."

I concur in all this, except the insinuation against the moral honesty of the Isthmians, which is somewhat gratuitous. In this respect, the people of the Isthmus are very much like those in other countries of the same condition and of the same social pretensions. Depredations are sometimes committed upon merchandise without doubt, in its transit over the Isthmus, and thefts occur entirely too often. But where do they not occur? I think it neither liberal nor just to denounce a whole population in this sweeping manner, on account of the delinquencies of a few individuals of one particular class—the carriers. The expense and delay attending the transshipment, including inevitable loss and damage, furnish objection enough to a common canal, without imagining or inventing any other.

A ship canal, with twenty feet of water, allowing vessels of ten or twelve hundred tons burden to pass, is the great desideratum, and they in my opinion (as I have said in my first letter) can only be made across the Isthmus of Panama—the Atlantic terminus being in the neighborhood of Chagres and the Pacific terminus at or not far from Panama; and, unless a sufficient depth of water can be found within thirty or forty miles of Chagres, I shall regard the practicability of a ship canal, as very questionable. It is said in the *Debats*, that the river San Juan, flowing from lake Nicaragua to the Atlantic, "is deep enough for frigates, almost its whole length." This is certainly a mistake I think. Frigates draw from fifteen to twenty-two feet of water, and there is not in my opinion, a third of the San Juan of that depth, and I have no doubt, that it would cost less, mile for mile, to dig a ship canal, than to remove the obstructions in that river.

The writer of the article in the *Debats*, says also, that "the time will come, when the Rimac, "In the neighborhood of Lima, will be connected with the Amazon by a rail-way or a canal."

As no time is specified when this is to happen it cannot be safely contradicted; but that time, if ever it comes, is very remote, I fancy—at least five hundred years off, in my opinion, and as we, of the present age, cannot have any great interest in what is to occur in that day, a discussion of the subject would be unprofitable and superfluous. I will say, however, that this dictum seems to have been ventured, rather from an inspection of a map of South America, than from any very accurate geographical, topographical or hydrographical knowledge of the country, through which that rail-way or canal would have to pass, which is a region in all respects most unfavorable to canalling or railroad making. The author seems to express himself, as though he believed that the Rimac is a navigable stream, which it is not, and has not either length, breadth, depth or volume to entitle it to be called a river.

It would have been more exact, had the writer said, that the Amazon will be connected

some day with the Pacific, by a rail-way or canal, which, however, I do not regard as being more than barely possible. The road or canal, in order to reach the navigable waters of the Amazon, must be I think, not less than four hundred miles in length, though some of the tributaries of that river are to be met with, within one hundred and fifty miles, and I much doubt, whether a canal can be made through the Andes, for the want of feeders or from the difficulty of making them available, in consequence of the arid, rugged, precipitous character of the country. There are mountains fourteen or fifteen thousand feet high, which would have to be overcome some how by fair means or by foul, and though much of this elevation might be avoided, by running the road through the gorges or breaks in the *cordillera* or mountain chain, yet, the height to be fairly met and surmounted, is much greater I imagine, than the boldest engineer has ever yet thought of encountering.

But it appears to me, that any speculation about this matter is premature, by four or five centuries at least. When the country of the upper Amazon and Peru, comprising nearly three millions of square miles, shall have a population of twenty-five or thirty millions, instead of about two millions, as at present, then this project may be taken seriously into consideration. But it is doubtful whether that amount of population or anything approaching it will ever exist, although the territory is adequate to the support of double the number probably. For many reasons—human laziness being a prominent one—the warm regions (they are not all warm) of the tropics in South America do not appear to be favorable to the increase of population, notwithstanding the very little labor it requires to procure subsistence, as I have mentioned in my former letter. Nor does there appear to be a decided tendency towards augmentation anywhere in the Spanish American States, though in some of them the numbers are slowly increasing. It may be assumed as certain, I think, that at the time of the conquest, Peru had double the population that she has at present; and without giving plenary credit to the amplifications and exaggerations of the benevolent advocate of the Indians, LAS CASAS, I have little doubt that all the civilized or quasi-civilized countries of the continent, conquered by the Spaniards, were much more populous than they have ever been since. The countries I mean, are that part of Mexico, formerly known as Anahuac, and some of the ancient neighboring States, Yucatan, part of Central America, part of Cundinamarca, in New Granada, Quito and Peru. I use the word civilized, as descriptive of those nations or communities that had established forms of government of some kind or other, and systems of laws more or less perfect, who relied upon agriculture for subsistence, who manufactured cloth and wore clothes, and who had made some progress in a variety of arts, as all those nations had done.

I repeat, that all that I have written about the difficulty of making a ship canal to connect the two oceans, it has not been my intention to say anything, calculated to discourage the undertaking, but to state facts, and to

enable others to understand and to appreciate the difficulties of it. My object is to promote enquiry and discussion, and to place the subject before the public in its true light, (as far as I am capable of doing so) which has never yet been done, as I believe, nor had the question ever before been as fully, as lucidly and as satisfactorily discussed as it has been by M<sup>r</sup>. WHEATON, and he does not seem to have fully considered the numerous obstacles that must be encountered by those who commit themselves to this more than Herculean enterprise—more than Herculean I say, for the cleansing of the Augean stables, though no small hydrographical achievement—as the story is told—was but a trifle compared to the digging a ship canal across the Isthmus.

I repeat, and it cannot be repeated too often, that this enterprise is too vast a one for an individual or a company of individuals, unless they can command thirty or forty millions of dollars, and afford to wait from five to ten years before they would receive any interest. No capitalist will embark his fortune in the experiment in my opinion—none has embarked, and none ought to embark in it—and when we see the names of unknown individuals with no visible or invisible capital flourishing in the papers, as grantees of charters obtained from the New Granadian government for making rail-ways and canals through the Isthmus, we may be sure that the whole affair is nothing more or less than one more humbug to be added to the now most copious list of humbugs, with which the public has been annoyed or gulled or amused during the last quarter of a century.

I am, with high respect,

Yours, &c.,

J<sup>r</sup> C. PICKETT.

FRANCIS MARKOE, Jr., Esq.,  
Cor. Sec. of the Nat. Institute.

### LETTER III.

LIMA, Sept. 30, 1844.

DEAR SIR:—After sending you two communications respecting a ship canal across the Isthmus of Panama, I certainly did not contemplate sending a third; but yet I send it—why, I now proceed to state.

There has been lately published here a letter from one of the engineers mentioned, in my last, sent nearly a year ago by the French government to explore and survey the Isthmus, with reference to the construction of artificial communications through it. This gentleman says, in substance, that “a canal is a work of very possible execution, and much more easy than that of many canals in Europe”—that it will be from 75 to 80 thousand metres, a little more or less—(about fifty miles) that in crossing the Isthmus it must be carried to the height of about 130 metres—(about 420 feet) which may be reduced by a deep cut at the summit to 110 metres, (about 361 feet) that forty locks will be necessary on each slope from the summit; eighty in all—that at the highest elevation there is no stream of water that will serve to feed the canal; but that an abundant supply can be “easily” obtained by constructing artificial reservoirs, that will be filled during the rainy season.

The engineer gives no further details—no estimate of the cost of the canal; of the time required to complete it, or of any thing; saying very properly that his report must first be made to the minister who confided his mission to him, and that besides, he had not finished and adjusted all his calculations. The letter is addressed to the Governor of Panama, and is published in the Spanish language.

I suppose that the engineer is speaking without doubt, of a ship canal, as he calls it, an *ocean canal*; (*canal oceánico*) and speaks of ships (*navios*) passing through it. It may be premature to make any remarks upon what he has said in a hasty and informal note, or until his final report is made; and criticism upon it at present may be invidious and ill-timed. But still the letter is to me, so curious and interesting, and the deductions so antipodal to what I should have anticipated from the data given, that having scribbled somewhat about this same canal, I cannot abstain from making a few observations in addition to those I have already made, holding myself ready to confess and retract all the errors I may fall into, and to make the *amende honorable* to the engineer if I do him injustice.

The length of the canal will not exceed fifty miles, and the greatest elevation to be overcome is 428 feet, reducible to 301 by a cut of sixty eight. The elevation is four times as much as I supposed it would be, and the consequence is that the obstacles in the way of a ship canal which I had indeed supposed to be almost insurmountable are in fact much greater than I had imagined. To dig a canal through the Isthmus, through which ships of twelve hundred tons could pass, supposing there to be but little lockage, seemed to me, the country, the climate, and the circumstances considered, to be a gigantic undertaking; but when it turns out that the canal has to be carried over ground 428 feet high, and that at the summit there are no streams for feeders, to think of making it seems to me to be contemplating scarcely any thing short of an impossibility. And yet the engineer says, the canal will be "more easily constructed than many canals in Europe." But certain it is, that there is not in Europe, or in the world a ship canal of fifty miles in length constructed in the teeth of so many adverse circumstances. It is not necessary to be an engineer to know that the digging of a canal for twenty feet of water, through a level country and under the most favorable circumstances; healthy climate, abundance of provisions and cheap labor, must still be very expensive; nor is it necessary to be an engineer to know, that the expense must be vastly augmented—three, four or five fold, when the circumstances are not favorable—climate not very healthy, hot and enervating, and favorable to the generation of disease, when persons are crowded together as they are on canals when being constructed—a rugged, broken, rocky country, and hills of no small height to be surmounted; and labor, provisions, supplies of all kinds, except a few tropical productions perhaps, very dear as would be the case in the Isthmus. Not less than half the excavation probably, would be made in solid rock, and this and the deep cut at the summit and the eighty locks, are formi-

dable facts. An opinion as to what the cost would be cannot be much more than a conjecture—a mere rough guess, and it does not appear to me to be possible with every appliance of science, of art, of industry, and with all the data obtained or obtainable, to make anything like an accurate and reliable estimate of the cost of the work. Now, after what the engineer has said, I should not think of putting it at less than fifty or sixty millions of dollars.

Think but of those eighty locks, the deep cut at the summit, and the artificial reservoirs for collecting rain water to feed the canal! And these reservoirs, be it remembered, must be of a capacity to hold water enough to supply the canal during the whole dry season of seven months, saying nothing about leakage and evaporation. Why, the engineer who offered to cut Mount Athos—was it?—into a statue of ALEXANDER THE GREAT, holding a river in one hand and a city in the other; was it not as bold a man as he who would undertake to make this "ocean canal," as the engineer calls it.

I read not long ago in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, (Paris,) an article of considerable length, written by Mr. CHEVALIER, in which he discusses as Mr. WHEATON had done before him, the practicability and utility of an artificial communication to connect the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. He examines at some length, the advantages and disadvantages of all the routes that have been proposed, and decides in favor of Panama. He considers a ship canal to be perfectly practicable, and believes that it may be constructed without any enormous expenditure of treasure; but, that nevertheless it is rather too great an undertaking for private individuals. He proposes, therefore, that it shall be undertaken and completed by France and England as copartners, assuming that it would not cost France more than thirty or forty millions of francs for her half of the work—estimating the whole cost of the canal, at from 60 to 80 millions—or from twelve to sixteen millions of dollars, certainly not more in my opinion, than one fourth part of what the actual cost would be.

But the most amusing part of Mr. CHEVALIER's article is, the idea that France and England could unite for the purpose of making the canal at their own cost for the benefit of mankind. The idea is full of philanthropy and benevolence, but is rather utopian it seems to me for the present day, and in advance of the age some hundreds of years. But still believing as I do in human progress and improvement, I think the time will come when nations will unite for similar purposes, but that time is not yet nor near. Now France, that is, Louis Philippe, would prefer using her thirty or forty millions for the building of thirty or forty more war steamers, or in adding to the fortifications at Paris and at Algiers, and Great Britain would prefer to invest her 30 or 40 millions in military armaments also, or in adding two or three additional kingdoms to her East India possessions.

The French engineer says nothing in his letter to the governor of Panama, about the termini of the canal, a matter of primary importance, and which are a *sine qua non* to the canal. At Chagres, there is not sufficient depth

of water, nor at Panama either, unless at high tide. But this the engineer has duly considered without doubt, and has found points where there is a sufficiency of water, or he would not have announced so unreservedly, that the canal is "a work of very possible execution." His letter I assume to have been written with reference to a ship canal. It is time wasted to say much about one of any other description. A mere boat canal would not be of much more general utility, than a good road from the river Chagres to Panama, which might be made at no great expense. A discussion about any kind of a canal except a maritime, I hold to be of no great interest to anybody but the Isthmians. The expense, delay and multitudinous casualties that would attend the discharge, transit and re-shipment of merchandise would present insuperable difficulties to that mode of keeping up commercial intercourse with the East.

A pamphlet of considerable length has been recently published at Panama, by a Frenchman residing there, (M. DENAIN,) in which the subject of an artificial communication is discussed, and the writer decides unhesitatingly against a canal, and in favor of a good road to be constructed from sea to sea. And so far I think his opinion is correct. A canal is vastly preferable to be sure, but that cannot or will not be made. What is most desirable, therefore, must be abandoned or postponed, and that adopted which is practicable. A road would be of great use in the Isthmus, but I cannot suppose that it would ever realize the golden expectations of M. DENAIN, who is a little utopian in his notions, as well as M. CHEVALIER. He says, that a good road would increase the value of the property in the Isthmus, to between four and five hundred millions of dollars, which I will not contradict, but cannot believe. I should be most happy to see or hear of this vast augmentation of wealth, yet I cannot be persuaded that the mere making of a road, though it were to be paved with bars of silver, as the streets of this city were in olden time, upon the arrival of a new viceroy, could produce this magical result, the silver not being taken into the account. But we live in an age of wonders, and M. DENAIN's predictions, *couleur de rose*, as they are, may one day be

verified, and when they are, I shall be prepared to doubt, whether some of the gorgeous and dazzling and bewildering descriptions of wealth and magnificence, we meet with in the Arabian Nights, are quite the fictions they are generally considered by matter-of-fact persons to be. The Isthmus, with all its soil, and every species of property to be found in it, real, personal and mixed, I cannot suppose to exceed in value forty or fifty millions of dollars, and this is to be decupled according to the sanguine and ingenious Frenchman, merely by making a road some twenty miles in length, which is not to cost I think, he says, more than two hundred thousand dollars.

For three hundred years and more, the Isthmus has been the subject of almost incessant speculation. It commenced, I believe, with HERNAN CORTEZ, who was at first confident that there must be a strait through it, having persuaded himself that the Almighty had not made a continent of such vast length, without leaving an opening between the two seas, and a similar notion prevailed to a great extent among the learned in Europe. (PRESCOTT.) But the speculators were wrong, as they often are. We have the continent 146 degrees in length—nearly ten thousand miles—but the great desideratum, the strait, we have not, and to make an artificial one, is likely to puzzle the ingenuity of all Christendom.

SIR WALTER RALEIGH said, that the Isthmus of Panama was "the keys of the world"; and so it may have appeared to be in his day, when the doubling of the Capes of Good Hope and of Horn, were considered to be daring and perilous achievements. But now, that they are doubled every day, and by any kind of craft, and by any kind of a navigator, the importance of a passage through the Isthmus has been greatly diminished.

Here I terminate for the present, and forever probably, my scribbling about a canal through the Isthmus, leaving to wiser heads and abler pens, the further discussion of the subject.

With great respect,

Yours truly,

J. C. PICKETT.

FRANCIS MARXOE, Jr., Esq.,  
Cor. Sec. of the Nat. Institute.

# ANCIENT RUINS IN PERU.

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LIMA, OCTOBER 10, 1843.

DEAR SIR: I now enclose to you the original and translation of a letter lately published, from Judge Nieto to the Prefect of the Department of the Amazon, in which he describes some very extensive and interesting ruins in the province of Chachapoyas. This province is about two hundred and fifty miles to the north of Lima, and about two hundred and fifty from the coast, and is looked upon here as being rather remote; is not very populous, and not much known to the inhabitants of the metropolis.

The official station of Judge Nieto, who appears to be an intelligent man, and of some reading, (learned, it may be,) is a sufficient guaranty, I suppose, that he has intended to describe what he has seen, faithfully and accurately; yet his description, and particularly the beginning of it, appears to me to be rather confused and unsatisfactory. I cannot but believe that he has exaggerated considerably the height of the edifices he visited, which it was rather natural to do, unless he had actually measured them; and this he does not seem to have done. I think, too, that he has used the word *circumference* for *contents*. But, supposing this to be the case, still there can be no doubt that the ruins are gigantic and curious, of unknown origin, and of unknown destination, unless they were intended for cemeteries or fortresses, as the Judge conjectures, but which does not seem to be as yet very clearly proven, though that they were intended for one or the other I think probable. But, being on a scale of great magnificence and extent, it is rather difficult to believe that that country could ever have been so populous as to require such extraordinary structures for the reception of the dead. Yet it may have been, for evidence enough is found in many parts of America to prove that regions now desert and desolate, once teemed with a dense, a busy, and perhaps a happy population; and this may have been the case in Chachapoyas, some centuries ago.

Judge Nieto, not satisfied with describing what he had seen, indulges in system-making, and at the close of his letter announces his theory, which is, that America is the "old world with respect to the other parts of it," and that Babylon, Balbec, &c., were modern compared to the people that once inhabited Chachapoyas. In support of this theory he embodies a variety of facts, as he considers them, more or less plausible—some unques-

tionable, some not very well established, some not of much force, and others, apparently, rather in his favor. I admire the boldness of the Judge and commend his enthusiasm, but am not able to adopt his conclusions, though I would willingly do so, for I too indulge a little of that continental pride, if it can be so called, which leads me to wish to see it proven that America is really the "old world," and the land that first enjoyed the blessings of civilization. I fear though that this cannot be established, and that an impartial examination of the subject must lead to admissions not very favorable to a high antiquity. I propose to consider Judge Nieto's arguments somewhat at length, but not in the spirit of controversy, for my feelings are with him, though my judgment compels me to dissent from the views he has taken of this very interesting subject.

The hair on the heads of the infant skeletons was short, fine, the Judge says, and unlike that of the Indians of the present day. This proves but little. Time and circumstances may have changed the original color of the hair. The Spanish word for the color is *rubio*, which is not very definite, for it is used for a variety of hues, more or less reddish or fair. Short and fine it was, of course, as the hair of an Indian infant is. Should hair of this description be found on the skulls of the skeletons of adults, so uniformly as to show that that kind of hair belonged to the race, then the argument would have weight; but if found only in a few instances it would be entitled to none, for the Albinos have white hair or wool, and Catlin found in the "Far West" a young Indian woman whose hair was naturally, or rather preternaturally, white.

The Judge assumes that the ancient articles of gold and silver of elegant workmanship which are discovered from time to time, as well as the hard precious stones, could not have been executed without instruments of iron and steel, which were absolutely unknown to the Indian aborigines of Peru, as I believe, and as is generally believed. It is true that ancient articles of gold and silver, and of curious and elaborate workmanship, are sometimes found, and also that hard stones, emeralds, turquoises, and rock crystal, (there were no others,) were cut and fashioned in various ways. The question is, could these articles have been produced without the use of iron and steel? The Judge maintains that they could not be; I entertain a different opinion.

I do not pretend to cite as conclusive the authority of the Spanish authors, who wrote about Peruvian affairs soon after the conquest. Although they all, I believe, favor the opinion that the articles in question were the work of the race of people found in Peru by the Spaniards, and say that iron and steel were unknown, and express their wonder how such curious things could be made without them. But these writers, though indifferently honest, and in many respects authentic, were credulous, not very acute, with a propensity, without knowing it, to exaggerate, and withal bigoted and superstitious, and would not have dared to start any theories that, like Judge Nieto's, might have made the new world just discovered more ancient than the *old*, for they had the fear of the Inquisition before their eyes.

It is known that the natives of this continent, before the arrival of the Spaniards, in place of iron and steel, used obsidian, flint, copper, and a mixture of copper and tin, and with these, and with much perseverance and ingenuity in the use of them, it appears to me that nothing that is antique has yet been discovered that may not have been produced without the agency of iron, from such vast edifices as exist in Central America, Yucatan, and Chachapoyas, down to the gold and silver tweezers sometimes found not weighing more than a five cent piece. In working gold and silver there would be no difficulty, and the hard stones, emeralds, &c., by allowing time, patience, and some ingenuity, present none that is insuperable. We know that some arts, more curious than useful, have been lost in Europe and Asia, and it does not appear to me to be a very violent supposition that the ancient Peruvians might have possessed a method of cutting and polishing precious stones not now known, and perhaps never to be.

The solution of this difficulty, which I now offer, is greatly strengthened I think by an argument which does not appear to have been sufficiently considered by those who maintain that the ancient works could not have been executed without the use of iron and steel—which is, the little value of time to the ancient indigence. This I deduce from well established facts as a strictly logical inference. I speak only of Peru, but what I say will apply, perhaps, to every country in America, where antiquities are to be met with. The Government of the Incas, though in many respects paternal and just, was nevertheless sternly despotic. The Inca, the monarch was not only the *pater patrie*, but was also the absolute owner of the soil and of every thing on it—of all the men, all the women, and all the chattels; and this not in the feudal sense, as lord paramount, but as a planter owns the slaves belonging to his plantation, and indeed his ownership was still more absolute. Whether this unlimited power was abused or not, depended entirely on the personal character of the sovereign. Humboldt, speaking of the Inca government, says that it produced “general comfort and but little private happiness; there was more submission to the will of the sovereign than love of country; try; passive obedience, without courage for bold undertakings; and the founder of the

“empire of Cuzco (Manco Capac) in flattering himself that he could force men to be happy, reduced them to the condition of simple machines.”\* This is rather a sombre picture.

In a country with such a government, which was generally as mild and indulgent, however, as the institutions permitted the sovereign to be, and with a crowded population, I suppose that labor must have been very abundant and very cheap, and that a mechanic could afford to dedicate months or even years to a piece of work that would now be executed in a day or two. It is further to be considered, that according to the institutions, all luxury was almost entirely banished by sumptuary laws rigidly enforced; and the utmost simplicity was practised in every thing—particularly in food and clothing. With such a polity, in a mild climate, without winter (as known to us) and with fertile soil, with no literature, and little or nothing to minister intellectual occupation, time could have been of but little value to those who disposed of it as a marketable commodity, and to others of less. In China, servants can be had for fifty cents per month. Were it possible to institute a comparison, I think it would appear that wages were still lower in ancient Peru.

If I am not wrong in my reasoning, there is no necessity for assuming the existence of a race distinct from or superior to that which occupied this country at the time of its conquest by the Spaniards. I suppose that if the Inca chose to do so he could have kept one-tenth of the whole population of Peru constantly employed; and that vast numbers were employed, the edifices, roads, and very extensive works for irrigating the soil found by the Spaniards, were visible and unquestionable proofs. In an ancient wall at Cuzco, there are rocks, which, judging from their dimensions, do not weigh less probably than two hundred tons. And some of these rocks, Garcilaso de la Vega says, were brought three or four leagues, and conveyed across a river. How would it be possible for a people ignorant of almost all mechanical contrivances to perform such a labor, but by the application of physical force instead of mechanical skill? And that force was without doubt applied. Garcilaso relates that on one occasion, one of these huge rocks broke loose from its fastenings and crushed four thousands persons, and though I think the number exaggerated, still the fact goes to prove that vast numbers of persons were employed in those great works which now astonish the beholder and tempt him to exclaim, “There were giants in those days!” No. There were no giants, but an infinity of human machines directed by one iron will; and wherever these structures are found I consider them to be proofs pregnant and decisive of two things: that at the time they were erected, there existed a dense population, and a severe and despotic government. We are in the habit of regarding the pyramids of Egypt

\* Le fondateur de l'Empire du Cuzco, en se flattant de pouvoir forcer les hommes à être heureux les avait réduits à l'état de simples machines.

as monuments of a great and enlightened people, when they are in truth, I suppose, nothing more than monuments of the despotism and cruelty of the Egyptian kings. We are astonished at the gigantic and imposing magnitude of these structures—think of the forty centuries that have passed over them, and give but little thought to the oppressed and miserable multitudes that erected them. The Thames tunnel, subterranean and subfluvial as it is, is a much nobler monument, in my opinion, than all the pyramids and all the obelisks of Egypt together. And the Croton Aqueduct that supplies the city of New York with water, is a still greater and more useful work.

JUDGE NIETO argues that the inhabitants of Chachapoyas could have had no motive for erecting the *fortress*, as he calls it at the close of his letter, on account of their pacific character; and that from TUPAC YUPANQUI, the conqueror of the country, until the coming of the Spaniards, there was no time to build it, and that there were no materials. This, I must say, is taking but a very partial view of the matter. There is no historical authority, I believe, that goes to show certainly that the fortress, if one, was built in the time of the Incas, or that it was not. It might have been erected by them, or it might have been before they conquered Chachapoyas; for GARCILASO expressly says, that when YUPANQUI invaded the country, the inhabitants defended themselves courageously, and that they had many fortresses occupying strong positions which he found it difficult to reduce. They at length submitted, being overpowered. They rebelled against HUYANA CAPAC, as the Judge states, but being abandoned by their allies, they thought it more prudent to implore the sovereign's clemency than to engage in a hopeless contest; for, left as they were alone, the conflict would have been about as equal as if the State of Delaware should make war upon all the other States of the Union. The *Chachas*, as they were called, might have been turbulent and rebellious subjects; but I do not think there exists any reason for supposing that they were such blustering braggarts as the Judge represents them to be. GARCILASO, from whom he takes the story of the intercession of the *matron* (who had been a *chere amie* of YUPANQUI) in their behalf, does not give them this character. On the contrary, he says they were brave and warlike.

According to an old Spanish author, the word Chachapoyas, or more correctly, *Chachapuyas*, signifies the *place of strong men*. Whether this name bears any relation to the character of the people or not is uncertain; but there can be no doubt that the Chachas were a superior race to the nations or tribes in their vicinity, and, as they understood and practised the art of constructing fortified places not easily taken, it is not illogical to suppose that they were in some degree civilized before their incorporation with the Peruvian empire; that they had a knowledge of the mechanical arts as then practised, and that they were the architects of the edifice described by JUDGE NIETO; and their seems to be no necessity whatever for supposing it to be a monument of a "great and enlightened nation that occupied the territory," and that had "declin-

ed as Babylon, Balbec and the Syrian cities had done." My opinion is, that that great and enlightened nation, supposed to be acquainted with iron and steel, was no other than the Chachas, who had not deteriorated when discovered by the Spaniards, but had made some further advances in civilization, perhaps, after building the fortress, cemetery or temple, or whatever it may be, in consequence of their union with the Peruvians.

There is another argument (whether overlooked, heretofore, or not, I do not know) which militates strongly against the idea of the existence of that great and enlightened nation, familiar with the use of iron and steel, to whose agency is ascribed the remarkable and magnificent ruins that are found on this continent, and which it is at once both natural and pleasing to assign a very remote antiquity. This is, that the manufacture of iron is an art at once so useful and simple, that if once known, it is scarcely possible it could be lost. The people possessing it might decline, relapse, it might be, into barbarism—lose many arts, but one so indispensable (now considered to be) both to the savage and civilized man, could not be lost, it seems to me, by any other means than by the sudden and total annihilation of the race. That any such catastrophe has taken place, there is no reason to believe, and it appears to me that the art of manufacturing iron, if once known, and extensively practised, as it must have been, if practised at all by the ancient inhabitants of South America, would have been almost in as little danger of being lost, as the art of cooking food. To this I add, that I believe it certain that not the slightest trace of iron instruments has been discovered at any time, by any person, among the ancient ruins—not an atom of the metal, nor even a particle of rust, to indicate its existence; which, superadded to the fact, that all the authors, ancient and modern, say that iron was unknown to the natives at the arrival of the Spaniards, is sufficient to warrant the conclusion, that it had never been known in the country. KEMPFER supposes that the Japanese possess the art of hardening copper, so as to make it supply the place of iron. I doubt this; but if such an art exists now, or ever did exist, and was known to the ancient inhabitants of this continent, many difficulties would be removed. I cannot believe, though, that it was known to them. Had it been, I cannot suppose that it would have been lost.

All this being considered, it appears to me, that there is nothing to support JUDGE NIETO, in the opinion that the edifice he describes, was erected by a very ancient people acquainted with iron and steel. I must believe that the opinion expressed by MR. STEPHENS, in his valuable and interesting works, in which he describes the ruins of Palenque and of Yucatan, is the correct one—that "they (the ruined cities) are not the works of a people who 'have passed away, and whose history is lost,' but of the same races who inhabited the 'country at the time of the Spanish conquest,' or of some not very distant progenitors;" and the facts and arguments adduced by him, in support of this opinion, seem to me to be conclusive. The present degraded and wretch-

ed condition of the Indians proves nothing but that the Spaniards carried out most effectually their atrocious policy, which was to make of them hewers of wood and drawers of water with the least delay—to convert them from independent, rational beings, into stupid, passive machines; and the object was accomplished with surprising celerity. Within less than half a century after the Spaniards had conquered the country, the condition of the aborigines was more deplorable, if possible, than at the present day. It would seem that such an astonishing metamorphosis would be impossible, supposing them to be the descendants, not very far removed, of those who built the ruined cities. But it might be so, for never were conquerors more successful in obliterating the national and individual character of the conquered than the Spaniards. They did not want to make of their vassals, either citizens or subjects, but slaves, and they made them so by a very commendable process—by condemning them to incessant labor, and by proscribing all the laws, customs, usages and religious rites that were calculated to foster in the slightest degree the sentiment of nationality.

The South American Indians are not the only people who have undergone such an extraordinary transformation. The Copts of the present day are the descendants of the ancient Egyptians, and the Egyptian Arabs of those who conquered the country in the name of Mahomet. But the most striking example is that of the modern Greeks. Who could have supposed, but for the irrefragable attestations of history, that, after submitting to the brutal and fanatical Turk, they were descended from those who fought at Salamis and Marathon? It is true, they had begun to degenerate before conquered by the Turks, but that conquest alone accounts for their rapid declension.

The absence of tradition among the Indians in relation to their former *status* is very satisfactorily accounted for by Mr. Stephens. In that respect they do not differ from other communities in the same situation. There is but little tradition among any of the indigenous races that have been *reduced* (*reducido*, an expressive word) by the Spaniards, though some of them have had abundant materials for very glorious and inspiring traditions. Such are the Mexicans, the Yucatecos, the Palenquenos, the Peruvians, and the Bogotanos. A state of abject slavery is decidedly unfavorable to the transmission of traditional lore; and no nation, I think, has ever been very traditional in its character unless it has enjoyed a considerable degree of freedom—individual, if not political—nor unless it has been somewhat intellectual and imaginative, (with or without literature;) nor unless it has claims (founded or unfounded) to glorious achievements in war. In their most palmy days the Indians in question may not have abounded much in tradition, or, if they did abound in it, that they should have forgotten it in three hundred years, enslaved, oppressed, and; crushed as they have been, is certainly not astonishing. It would rather be if they had not. The Araucanians, immortalized by Ercilla in his poem, have traditions, and well they may have, for they resisted, and successfully, all attempts by the

Spaniards to subjugate them for more than two hundred years, and were not content to act on the defence merely, but were often the assailants, and with signal success sometimes. But, should this indomitable race be reduced to slavery, and continue enslaved for three centuries, it is highly probable that at the end of that period their traditions, as well as every trace of the bold and independent character for which they are distinguished, would be utterly and irretrievably lost.

Hence I conclude that certain favorable circumstances are essential to the existence of much tradition among a people, and that under very adverse circumstances they may soon be forgotten in a country where there are no collateral records, and where the art of writing was unknown, or very imperfectly practised, as among the Indians of this continent; for the picture-writing of Mexico must have been very defective, and from its nature difficult of attainment. Judging from the inscriptions discovered in Central America and Yucatan, it may be supposed that those who made them possessed something like the art of writing; but it must have been, I think, very imperfect. But this is only conjectural,—the art, if known, may have been a very difficult one, and known to but few, probably, as the schoolmaster was not abroad in those days.

The *quipos* or *quipus* in Peru were still more defective than the others, it may be presumed. These, as is well known, were nothing more than *knots*, as is the meaning of the word, tied with cotton threads of different colors; and the whole process was strictly conventional, there being no way of expressing an idea that had not its predetermined sign. The *quipus* were used for keeping all the public accounts, births, deaths, receipts at the treasury, (not in money but in kind,) &c., and the annual report of the Secretary of the Treasury must have been a very curious document, and sometimes, perhaps, a skein rather difficult to unravel. But it must be said for the Peruvians, in the time of the Incas, that their probity has not probably been exceeded by that of any other people, ancient or modern. Among their public men, fraud, peculation, embezzlement, and bribery seem to have been unknown; and this is in part to be accounted for from the nature of the institutions, and partly from the fact that there was no money, that root and origin of all evil.

The *Quipucamayus* (keepers of the knots) were the scribes and historiographers, and also the auditors and comptrollers. They attained to great dexterity in their art, and could record and recite with surprising rapidity, and adjust accounts with undeviating accuracy; but they could not go far beyond this. Some events of a very important nature could be recorded, such as embassies, battles, &c., because the colors, number of knots, &c. to be used had been previously determined; but it was impossible to write a letter, however brief it might be, unless the *quipus* and the key had been concerted as in the use of the *cipher*. The *Inca*, therefore, when he wished to send an order to any part of his dominions, employed messengers, to whom it was given verbally. These were called *chasquis*, and were stationed constantly on the highways, one-fourth of a league apart;



and as they were swift of foot, and the messages being very brief generally, they were conveyed with considerable rapidity, faster than by a mail coach; but it is probable that serious blunders were sometimes committed, for, in transmitting an order one hundred miles, it had to be repeated by 130 persons.

But few, I fancy, have perused Mr. Stephens's very interesting volumes with more pleasure than myself, and, sensible of their merit as I am, I will venture a slight criticism on one passage, conscious that I do so in no cynical spirit. In his work on Yucatan, I understand him as rather persisting in the idea, which he pretty distinctly favors in his first volumes, that there is, somewhere about the southern parts of Mexico, embowered in the wilderness, an indigenous people, never known to the Spaniards, retaining its primitive characteristics, and among whom are those who can read the inscriptions at Palenque. Such is the idea, and it is certainly a very romantic and captivating one, too much so to be lightly surrendered were there any facts, or even probabilities to support it; but in my opinion, unfortunately, there are none. The inscriptions, it is to be feared, will never be read. They are a sealed book, I apprehend, to all living men. Upon them the genius and perseverance of a Champollion would be lost; and it is but too certain, I think, that all those who understand them have past away forever.

The idea of this undiscovered nation originated, if I mistake not, in a legend related to Mr. Stephens by a priest whom he met in Central America, a portion of which was clearly preposterous, and which the good father himself did not believe, I suppose, any more than Mr. S. But if the remainder were true, it shows that the existence of that sequestered people must have been known to the Spaniards, probably; and if it had been, there could have been no escape from their ferocity and avarice:

"Fire and sword were in their hands, and in their hearts

Were machinations for speeding of destruction."

Ever stimulated by the *sacra auri fames*, they were intimidated by no dangers, arrested by no obstacles. There were no barriers that they did not overcome, no fastnesses that they did not penetrate. Had such a people existed, they would have been discovered; and had they been discovered, they would have been subjugated.

Much of Spanish America is rough, rugged, mountainous country, but, notwithstanding, it was penetrated and explored in all directions soon after the conquest, either by armies, detachments, and parties, or by adventurous individuals; some to make discoveries, some to make conquests, all hoping to find gold, and not a few expressly in search of the fabulous *El Dorado*, for the belief in the existence of that golden country was universal, and to this day that belief still exists, though somewhat denuded of its extravagance. There are yet people who believe devoutly in mines and mountains of the precious metals, enough to enrich the world if they could but be found.

In 1838, not far from Quito, a tolerably intelligent person showed me a very lofty mountain at the distance of twelve or fifteen miles, which he assured me was nearly all silver, but that it was inaccessible on account of its steepness. Credulity, however, in relation to mines of gold and silver is not peculiar to South America.

The universal belief in the *El Dorado*, which had a thousand local habitations, was one cause why the country was traversed in all directions, for no impediment could arrest the explorers. Whoever has travelled much among the Andes, unless "native here and to the manner born," cannot fail to be surprised to find that certain regions have been visited, explored, and travelled over for hundreds of years, which one would be inclined to think would have been perfectly impenetrable.

I have travelled five days at a time among the Andes without seeing a human creature, except those with me, and along a track (not a road) which, for the most part, serpentinized over almost perpendicular precipices, or through a forest literally impervious, except by cutting one's way at every step. Provision, luggage, and every thing were carried on men's backs, and my saddle-horse was a stout mulatto, (part Indian,) whom I occasionally mounted when tired of walking. I felt at first a decided repugnance to this sort of equitation, and could not think of using a fellow-being as a beast of burden; but the necessity of the case and the custom of the country got the better of my scruples, as they had of those of more conscientious men, no doubt; and as the *sillero*, (chairman,) as he was called, told me it was his occupation to *carry Christians* over the mountains and solicited the job, I struck a bargain with him, and the price was ten dollars *through*, I riding about half the time. This quadrupedal biped, if so he may be called, turned out to be a very sure-footed and trusty animal, and carried me in perfect safety to the end of the route. The *modus equitandi* is this: Instead of a saddle a very light cane chair is used, which the chairman slings upon his back, and the traveller's face, when seated in it, is to the north, should he be going to the south, and *vice versa*. It is necessary that, when mounted, he should keep himself very accurately balanced, for there are many places in passing which a false step on the part of the *sillero* might cause a tumble down a precipice, which would be fatal both to the rider and to the ridden.

I have indulged in this digression for the purpose of showing what sort of regions are to be met with in the Andes, and that, repulsive and inhospitable as they are, they have been penetrated and explored hundreds of years ago, which makes it very improbable, it appears to me, that there can be any tribe or nation of aborigines not yet discovered—at all events, between Mexico and the Isthmus of Panama. If not found by any of the numerous exploratory expeditions set on foot by the Spaniards, still it seems to me that in the course of three hundred years it must have happened that some straggling white man or Indian would have reached them.

Of the legend related to Mr. Stephens, I have to say that it appears to me to be all pure invention from beginning to end. One of my reasons for believing this is, that, in many countries, the same kind of fables have had currency and have found believers. Seventy or eighty years ago it was believed in England by many that there existed in Wales an ancient Danish colony pursuing the "even tenor of its way," secluded from all the rest of the world, and preserving unadulterated its ancient language, customs, and laws. In Spain, one hundred years ago, the belief was general that there was somewhere in that kingdom a colony of the same description, (except that they were not Danes,) of very high antiquity, and called *Las Batuecas*. Nobody had visited the colony, or could give its *locus in quo*, but nevertheless its existence was not doubted; and so general was the preposterous idea that the celebrated Feijoo wrote a dissertation for the express purpose of proving that no such community had ever existed or could exist without being known. To these instances I will add that, in the United States, about thirty years ago, it was more or less believed that somewhere on the Upper Missouri there was a race of white men—known or supposed to be Welshmen—which turned out to be the Mandan nation, I believe, now extinct, or nearly so, by the ravages of the small pox.

I will here observe, though rather out of place, that in Peru traditions appear to have been rather better preserved among the Indians than in Central America, Yucatan, and elsewhere; and this is very easily accounted for: their history is not very ancient, and so extraordinary a Government as that of the Incas must have left traces and impressions not easily effaced; but still they would have been, probably, but for peculiar circumstances, and such as have perhaps no parallel in America. As I have already said, the Inca was the owner of all his subjects, and exercised an absolute *jus domini* without limitation or control, over males and females; and, as regards the latter, this right does not seem by any means to have been merely a nominal one, for almost all the Incas had very numerous families of children—one of them, Huayna Capac, left at his death between five and six hundred sons and daughters. It is proper to remark, *en passant*, that it was a maxim of the Government, sanctioned or submitted to by the people, that it was promotive of the public weal that the royal stock should be propagated as widely as possible; which, as it was considered to be of Divine origin, was a very natural idea, and condescension on the part of a lady, in this case, was neither injurious to her character nor offensive to her family: yet adultery was punished by the laws with great severity, with this exception. We may judge from this that the Incas were adepts in kingcraft, and that by virtue of their Divine right they had at their discretion all the wives and daughters in their empire, as they had incontestably. That most subtle and most successful of all impostors, Mahomet, inculcated a similar dogma with respect to himself, but he was rather more moderate than some of the Incas.

The Inca's issue, however numerous it may be, was all regarded as royal—legitimate and illegitimate. It followed, therefore, that there must have been a great number of royal extraction, and such was the fact. It was, therefore, not a very easy matter for the Spaniards to destroy them, though they destroyed a great many—many more no doubt than the Spanish writers admit, for they shift to the Inca Atahualpa the odium of having attempted to extirpate the whole race after his successful war against his brother Huascar. But he has had no indigenous historian and no apologist. Those who robbed him of his crown and of his life are his biographers, and to palliate their own violent and bloody doings it was necessary to describe him as a monster, and they have done so. He was, perhaps, a bad and cruel man, as well as a usurper; but those who have handed him down to posterity as such were far from being pure themselves, and were certainly not impartial.

The princes of the royal blood being so numerous, it was difficult to destroy them all, and all were not destroyed; and there being a rallying point for the Indians in the successors of the Incas, they frequently attempted to throw off the Spanish yoke, always without success, but they made some desperate struggles, the last between sixty and seventy years ago. Thus the tradition of the ancient empire, of its greatness and glory, was not lost, though it has faded into a very obscure and confused recollection of things past, which will a century hence be entirely obliterated, probably.

This view of the subject appears to be plausible at least, if not entirely satisfactory, and I venture to advance the opinion, by way of hypothesis, that it will be found, upon close inquiry, that throughout Spanish America, among all the indigenous nations or tribes who retain no traditions of their former political condition, the royal or reigning families have been destroyed simultaneously with or soon after the conquest, or shorn of their greatness, and so confounded with the common herd that they ceased to be recognisable. I speak of such as may be supposed to have had traditions.

To this it may be added, that the Spaniards sometimes intermarried with the royal and noble dames of Peru, soon after the conquest, and this contributed to save the descendants of the Incas from utter extirpation.

My speculations upon the matters touched in the foregoing remarks have led me to the following conclusions:

1. That Iron and steel had never been known in South America before the arrival of the Spaniards.
2. That all the ruins, structures, ornaments, &c. that have been discovered, have been erected or made without tools of those metals.
3. That the ruins in Chachapoyas are the works of the Chachas, before they were conquered by Tupac Yupanqui, or of the Incas themselves—most probably of the former.
4. That Mr. Stephens's opinion, that the "ruined cities are the works of the same races" who inhabited the country at the time of the "Spanish conquest, or of some not very distant progenitors," is correct.

5. That it is not probable there exists an undiscovered people in Mexico or Central America, or elsewhere, capable of reading the inscriptions at Palenque—or an undiscovered people of any kind, unless it may be some poor paltry tribe not worth discovering.

6. That there have been discovered no ruins or monuments on the American continent, whose age may not be within one thousand years. Such as are known not to go beyond four or five hundred years, as at Cuzeo, seem to be as ancient (I believe) as any, except, perhaps, one ruin in Mexico and one in Bolivia, (Upper Peru.)

I now conclude, having no apology to offer for this very long and rambling letter, except the interesting subjects which I have so imperfectly discussed in it.

I am, with much respect, your obedient servant,

J. C. PICKETT.

FRANCIS MARKOE, JR., Esq.,  
Cor. Secretary of National Institute.

PROVINCE OF CHACHAPOYAS,  
CUELAP, January 31, 1843.

To the Prefect of the Department:

SIR: Having come into this country of Cuelap to make the survey commanded by the Supreme Government of the Republic, I have discovered a work most worthy of the public attention, which is a wall of hewn stone 560 feet in width, 3,600 feet in length, and 150 feet high. This edifice being solid in the interior for the whole space contained within 5,376,000 feet of circumference, which it has, to the before-mentioned height of 150 feet, is solid and levelled, and upon it there is another wall of 300,000 feet in circumference in this form, 600 feet in length, and 500 in breadth, with the same elevation (150 feet) of the lower wall, and, like it, solid and level to the summit.\* In this elevation, and also in that of the lower wall, are a great many habitations or rooms of the same hewn stone, 18 feet long and 15 wide, and in these rooms, as well as between the dividing walls of the great wall, are found neatly constructed niches a yard or two-thirds in length, and a half yard broad and deep, in which are found bones of the ancient dead, some naked and some in cotton shrouds or blankets of very firm texture, though coarse, and all worked with borders of different colors. These niches differ from those in our pantheons (cemeteries) in nothing but their depth, for, instead of being two or three yards deep, which is necessary to keep our bodies in the erect position in which they are placed after death, they (the ancients) employed only two or three feet, because they were doubled up so that the chin and knee met, and the hands were interlaced with the feet like a human fœtus of four months.

The wall about three doors that have been discovered, deserves attention. At the right of

\* This description is not very intelligible, and is probably inaccurate. What the writer means by 5,376,000, and 300,000 feet in circumference, does not seem to be very clear. Perhaps he means *contents*.

each of the doors it is semi-circular, and at the left angular; and at the base commences an inclined plane which continues to ascend almost insensibly to the before-mentioned height of 150 feet, with the peculiarity that about half way there is a turret (*garita*;)† thence it proceeds, losing its straightforward direction with which it commenced, making a curve to the right of those ascending, having in the upper part a recess curiously constructed of the same hewn stone, from which all entry may be prevented, because those doors at the lower part outside the wall, commencing with only six feet of width, have in the superior anterior part only two feet. At the summit there is a pavilion or belvedere, from which may be seen not only the whole of the plain below and all the lagoons, but likewise a considerable part of the province, and as far as the capital, which is eleven leagues distant.

Next present themselves the entrances to the second and highest wall, equal in all respects to the first; and they are of smaller dimensions in length and breadth only, but not in height, as I have already said. There are also other sepulchres resembling small ovens, six feet high, and from twenty to thirty in circumference; on the base of each of which there is a slab, and on that slab a human skeleton.

Having examined these things yesterday, I retired with the crowd that accompanied me to take some repose, and to-day we ascended to the summit of a rock outside the wall which serves it for a foundation, and having passed by a road almost destroyed by the water, exposing ourselves to the hazard of a chasm, which threatened us, and which is nearly 900 feet deep, and supporting ourselves mutually, we reached a cavity formed by the rocks which originate in the mountain, to which there are ten heaps of human bones, perfectly preserved in their shrouds, one of which, an aged man, was wrapped in a hair cloth, which I have preserved with the skeleton. The other, which was probably a woman, in consequence of the separation of the bone of a leg and of the trunk from the head, was spoiled. The woman was old when she died, her hair being gray, and was, without doubt, the mother of seven children that composed seven of the heaps, two of which I have in my possession, and two of which were carried away by Don Gregorio Rodriguez, one of the company, together with a shroud of cotton of various colors, and a bandage worked with different colors, three of the skeletons of the children and one of the adult persons being left behind in consequence of the ligaments of the bones having giving way. All had invariably the same posture, and the hair of their little heads was fine, short, and reddish, (*rubio*), and unlike that of the aborigines of our day. The female had her ears pierced, and in them a cotton cord, twisted and thick.

I have since regretted that I was not able to continue my researches at that place, as I would probably have discovered much more; but we were obliged to separate, taking another direction for another spot, where, I was assured, there was much more to be seen. We de-

† The word *garita* means a sentry-box, but the word does not suit the case.

ascended on the side looking towards the north, and arrived at a very steep hill, which we ascended with great difficulty in consequence of its steepness and of the dry grass with which it was covered, that caused us to slip at every step. Having mounted up about 600 feet we found it impossible to go any further, because of a perpendicular rock, which would not permit us to approach a wall of square stones, with small apertures like windows, that was distant from the point that could be reached about sixty feet, and for want of time and a ladder we did not see what was contained within this wall, which occupies an elevation that looks towards the east, north, and west as far as the eye can reach. So I remained, with the mortification of not knowing anything about this work, and of the fossils and precious things it encloses, for the reason that it is very precipitous, and the judicial duty in which I was engaged would not permit me to explore the centre; and, besides, I was unable to leave the capital for any length of time, where the administration of justice was suffering from my absence. And to these obstacles was to be added the impossibility of undertaking any work for want of assistance, as the Indians have a great horror of this place on account of the mummies it contains, which, in their opinion, produce fatal diseases, if touched, all fled panic-struck at the sight of them. With great exertions, however, and upon seeing our familiarity with the bones, one or two of the most intelligent got the better of the fears with which an unlucky superstition had inspired them.

For these reasons I was not able to explore the wall at the southeast side, where I was assured there are some curiously formed ditches which cannot be approached from below, and one can reach them only by being let down with ropes from the tops of the walls. Nor could I visit a cave which Don Gregorio (a man of truth) assures me there is on the other side of the river Condechaca, where he says there are many skulls, pits, and other objects, and, having penetrated it to the distance of two squares—about two hundred yards—the torches were extinguished for want of air, and he could go no further. Should time and the Government favor me further discoveries may be made.

The ingenious and highly-wrought specimens of workmanship that are found as monuments of the ancients, the elegance of the cutting of some of the hardest stones, which could not be done without instruments of iron and steel, which were absolutely unknown to our ancestors, (the Indians,) the ingenuity and solidity of this gigantic work—all of wrought stone—there being neither reason nor motive

for the erection of this fortress, in consequence of the pacific character of the inhabitants of these provinces, and of their remoteness from the theatre of the war at the time of the conquest, (by the Spaniards;) the short time that intervened between the reign of Tupac Tupanqui, (an Inca,) the conqueror of the regions, and the advent of the Spaniards; his inability to furnish the materials for such a structure, or to find time to erect it, although the natives, it is said, were refractory, and that they rebelled against Huayna Capac, but their wars before they were incorporated with the government of the Incas were ridiculous and ephemeral, and their rebellion so transitory, that, so far from persisting in it, they implored pardon through the mediation of a matron, and obtained it; the secure manner of inhuming the dead, the rich in niches of stone and the poor among the rocks, probably—all this induces me to believe that, although the wall I have so imperfectly described may not be of the remotest antiquity—of the epoch at which Peru and America were peopled by civilized nations, from which the Europeans borrowed the idea of the pantheons\* they now use; at all events, the elegant articles of gold and silver, the curiously wrought stones that have been found in the *huacas*,† and many monuments and customs of our aborigines, have been taken, preserved, or transferred by a great and enlightened nation that occupied this territory, which declined in the same manner as others more modern, of which history informs us, as Babylon, Balbec, the cities of Syria, and others that have been destroyed, and remained in that state of isolation in which it was found by the great Manco, and consequently America is an old world with respect to the other four parts that compose the globe, as I propose to demonstrate more at large in the statistics of the Department that I am preparing with official and credible data, to which this note may serve as an appendix, and which I address to you that you may transmit it to the President of the Republic in the usual way.‡

God preserve you!

JUAN CRISOSTOMO NIETO.

\* Cemeteries are called pantheons in South America.

† A *huaca* is a large quadrangular mound built of unburnt bricks, in which the ancient Peruvians deposited their dead.

‡ I regret that it is not in my power to publish the foregoing letter in the original Spanish, which I cannot do, having no copy of it. The beginning of it is confused and unsatisfactory, which may be in consequence of errors of the press, as the writer was not at Lima when it was published.

# MAJOR JOHN ANDRE.

LIMA, AUGUST 5, 1844.

DEAR SIR: Looking over the poetical works of ROBERT SOUTHEY not long ago, I noticed the following passage in the preface to *MADOC*, which I had either not read before or had forgotten. MR. S. says—

"MISS SEWARD was not so much overrated 'at one time, as she has since been, unjustly depreciated. She was so considerable a person when her reputation was at its height, 'that WASHINGTON said, that no circumstance of his life had been so mortifying to 'him, as that of having been made the object 'of her invective, in her *Monody* on MAJOR ANDRE. After peace had been concluded 'between Great Britain and the United States, 'he commissioned an American officer, who 'was about to sail for England, to call upon 'her at Litchfield, and explain to her, that instead of having caused ANDRE's death, he 'had endeavored to save him, and she was requested to peruse the papers in proof of this, 'which he sent for her perusal.' 'They filled me with contrition,' says MISS SEWARD, 'for the rash injustice of my censure.'"

Now if, this incident in the life of GENERAL WASHINGTON, as related by MR. SOUTHEY, on MISS SEWARD's authority, is an admitted historical fact, there is nothing more to be said, though, I cannot but feel regret, that the Father of his Country should have stooped to justify himself to the most scurrilous and most mendacious of all his libellers at home or abroad, as undoubtedly was MISS SEWARD. I cannot persuade myself, however, that he did this, for I have no recollection of having seen in any biography of him, or in any history of the Revolution, a statement of his having done so. It may have escaped me though, and here where books relating to the political history of our country are scarce, it is not in my power to satisfy myself on this point.

I remember to have read the *Monody*, for the first and the last time, more than thirty years ago, when very young, and was so struck with the venom of the invective, and with the vigor of it too, as it then appeared to me, that some of the lines fastened themselves on my memory, where they yet remain. Among them are these:—

"For cowards only know,  
Persisting vengeance o'er a fallen foe."  
GENERAL WASHINGTON was the 'coward,'  
and ANDRE the 'fallen foe.' And again:—

"And infamy with livid hand shall shed  
Eternal mildews o'er his ruthless head."

The 'ruthless head' was WASHINGTON'S.—The poem abounds with figures and flowers in the same taste, and whatever may be now thought of their poetic merit, the authoress, if yet living, might claim that of being able to put into as few lines, as much ribaldry, as any other English poet or poetess could, not excepting MR. SOUTHEY himself, who had certainly a very pretty talent for billingsgate, as well as much other talent.

I am not sure that since I read the *Monody* I have ever seen it, and I presume that it is not much read in the United States at the present day, or in England either, for even there, it would not now be considered very good taste, to speak of GENERAL WASHINGTON'S 'ruthless head,' or to denounce him as a 'coward.' He might have heard of the *Monody*, but in the absence of positive proof, I cannot be persuaded that he ever read it, or that being made the object of its invective, was to him the "most mortifying circumstance of his life," or that he commissioned an American officer or any body else to make explanations to the authoress, with the view of deprecating her wrath, and of conciliating her good opinion. He very rarely took the trouble to contradict the libels published against him at home, which more immediately concerned him, and were of more serious import. It is not probable then, that his sensibility should have been so deeply wounded, as to induce him to get up a kind of special mission, with the view of counteracting an English libel, the most absurd and infamous of all the calumnies propagated against him. Or if he did, then on that one occasion—the only one I believe—did his imperturbable equanimity of character forsake him, and he, who has read the *Monody*, cannot be made to believe upon any thing less convincing than "proof of holy writ," that he ever commissioned any person to make explanations to the reckless and unscrupulous authoress. This language is not too strong, for he is represented in the *Monody* to be vindictive, inexorable, bloody and remorseless; and as being nothing better than the murderer of ANDRE. Nor is MISS SEWARD'S reputation so immaculate, as to place her beyond the reach of an impeachment, as a wilful and malignant prevaricator, for according to some of her English biographers, she was vain, affected, pedantic, much addicted to flattering those who loved flattery,

and not by any means remarkable for a scrupulous regard for truth. She flattered SOUTHEY very perseveringly, and he in return endeavored to save her poetical reputation from that oblivion, to which it had been consigned by the general consent of her countrymen. But still he says of her poetry, insinuating disparagement, that it belonged to the "brocade fashion" of DOCTOR DARWIN.

DOCTOR DARWIN is an instance of the instability and emptiness of poetical fame. Thirty or forty years ago, his poetry was as popular as SOUTHEY's has ever been, and thirty or forty years hence, may again be so. Though, now, condemned and neglected, and stigmatised as *brocade, tinsel and mere sound*, it was once extensively read and greatly admired by competent judges even, and after all, there is in it, unquestionably, much that is beautiful, much originality and much elegant versification. It may seem in our day to be rather monotonous, but it ought to be borne in mind, that it is the poetry of SCOTT, BYRON, SOUTHEY and others of the new School, that has made it appear so, and the poetry of DRYDEN and POPE compared with theirs, has something of the same appearance. The following lines of DARWIN [quoted from memory] ought to give him some claim, upon the indulgence of the readers of poetry in the United States. He is describing our Revolution:

"With patriot speed the quick contagion ran,  
Hill lighted hill and man electrized man;  
Her heroes slain, awhile Columbia mourn'd,  
And crown'd with laurels, Liberty return'd."

I return to GENERAL WASHINGTON.—It is true that he endeavored to save ANDRE, as MISS SEWARD says? Ought he to have endeavored to save him?

It is my belief that he did not endeavor to save him, and my conviction that he ought not to have done it. MR. SPARKS (Life of Washington) makes the following remark:—

"As the guilty ARNOLD was the cause of all the evils\* that followed an exchange of him for ANDRE would have been accepted; but no such proposal was intimated by the British General, and perhaps it could not be consistently done with honor and the course already pursued."

This is very true. "It could not be done consistently with honor." Sir Henry Clinton by surrendering ARNOLD would have divided the infamy of the latter—so imperative are the usages of war, that in such cases the greatest

\* "As the guilty ARNOLD was the cause of all the evils that followed," &c. This, under one aspect may be true. Had ARNOLD not been willing to play the traitor, the evils would not have followed; nor would they, had not SIR HENRY CLINTON been willing to purchase the traitor; nor would they so as to affect ANDRE, had he not been willing to make himself the agent and go-between in the nefarious transaction; and never was any man more completely the artificer of his own ruin than he, unless it could be assumed that he was acting throughout, in obedience to the orders of his superior, which he was bound to obey; but this, all military men and many that are not military, know, could not have been the case.

villains and traitors must be protected. No proposition, it is to be presumed, therefore, was formally made to the British General to save ANDRE by sacrificing ARNOLD; nor could it, if made, have been for a moment considered. In what way, then, did Gen. WASHINGTON endeavor to save Andre, as assumed by Miss SEWARD? This question I cannot answer otherwise than by saying that I do not believe he made any effort to save him; for if he had made it, I must suppose that he would have been saved. If he had not the power as commander-in-chief entirely to annul the sentence of the court-martial that condemned Andre to death, he could unquestionably have delayed the execution of it until an application could have been made to higher authority on his behalf, which, supported by the solicitation of the commanding general, would almost certainly have been successful. But no such appeal was made, nor do I believe that it was proposed to make it. It is very singular and inexplicable, then, that with a disposition to save ANDRE, according to Miss SEWARD, and able to array on the side of mercy an irresistible influence, he should have done nothing and proposed nothing calculated to benefit the prisoner, unless to intimate, perhaps, in an informal manner, that ANDRE could be exchanged for ARNOLD.

What inference is to be drawn from this apathy and inaction? But one, it appears to me, and that is, that WASHINGTON neither made an effort to save ANDRE, or had for a moment any intention of making it. If there exists anything like proof against this opinion, I am not aware of it. Miss SEWARD's assertion I do not value at any thing; had she enjoyed a very high character even for veracity, I should doubt the accuracy of her statement, for in making it she was white-washing herself, as she was well aware, and not General WASHINGTON. Times had greatly changed, and men's opinions, too, since the Monody was written. Then much sympathy was felt for Major ANDRE, and WASHINGTON was naturally regarded by many as a rebel, and by some, probably, as a homicide. But time that can do so much towards soothing resentments, softening asperities, and subduing animosities, had given him a very different standing with the English people, and it was evident even to Miss SEWARD herself that the ribaldries which she had poured out upon him so profusely, no longer delighted either the vulgar by its brutality, or the refined by its poetical merit, if it had any. Then nothing was more natural than that the poets who lacked neither boldness nor ingenuity should resort to this method of retracting her libel; or that MR. SOUTHEY, one of whose most assiduous flatterers she was, should assist her to extricate herself, when it cost him nothing to do so, but to repeat what she had told him, believing or affecting to believe it himself. And hence her contrition, it appears to me.

Having assumed that Gen. WASHINGTON did not endeavor to save ANDRE, I proceed to inquire whether he ought to have endeavored to save him, and unhesitatingly express the opinion that he ought not.

There has been much pathetic eloquence expended upon Major ANDRE's case, and much

rhetoric—historical, political, and miscellaneous—and to this I have nothing to say, except that some of it had better been omitted. I have to say, though, that all military history cannot furnish a case where a rigorous enforcement of the laws of war was more justifiable or more expedient. The ground taken by Sir HENRY CLINTON and some British writers, that ANDRE ought not to have been treated as a spy, because he had been brought within the American lines by an American officer, (ARNOLD,) was manifestly absurd, and was finally abandoned by every body who had any pretensions to sanity. He was not only a spy, but was moreover the correspondent and the accomplice of a traitor. And not only was he this, but he had been so deliberately and for a considerable time, whilst he and ARNOLD were corresponding under the assumed names of GUSTAVUS and ANDERSON. Thus his labors as a spy were not merely a single hasty and unconsidered act, but were cool, continuous, systematic, and persevering. The plan being matured, and the time having arrived for action, he, "nothing loth," was selected from many hundreds of British officers at New York, to give the finishing stroke to the diabolical plot that had been so long in or under concoction. He meets ARNOLD, coquettes a little about entering the American lines and about assuming a disguise; but he enters the one and assumes the other. Every thing was arranged, the treason was consummated, and nothing remained to be done but to deliver the fortress, (West Point,) and with it the whole patriot cause, perhaps, into the hands of the British commander. He whose sensibility and delicacy recoiled from the concealment of his military rank under a civic garb, had no misgivings, no "compunctious visitings" about the black and damnable treason he was abetting, or the clandestine and unchivalrous manner in which the negotiation had been conducted. He sets out on his return to New York, buoyant without doubt with self-gratulation at the successful issue of his intrigue, and revolving in his mind the applause and the recompense that awaited him. But there was a lion in his path. He was stopped by three militia men, and if it be not presumptuous to suppose that Providence interposed on the occasion, it may well be believed that those three incorruptible patriots had appeared by supernatural appointment at the time and the place for the express purpose of saving the American cause, and they saved it. Bribes were offered without stint, if they would let him pass—gold, valuables, promises of large rewards—but in vain. They were deaf to everything but honor and duty; the spy was captured, and the traitor would have been had Colonel JAMESON's sagacity been equal to his uprightness and good intentions. But it was impossible for him to suspect ARNOLD, I suppose; and, indeed, a man who had fought so gallantly and bled so freely for his country, was above suspicion until guilt was brought home to him.

Major ANDRE has been much lauded by the historians of the Revolution, for the frankness, dignity, and firmness he displayed after his capture, and I am not disposed to deny that he did

display them; but at the same time it seems to me that policy dictated the course he pursued subsequently, as much as frankness and detestation of disguise. Some say that his being entrapped by his captors, who represented themselves to be royalists, is a proof of his guileless and unsuspecting temper, and of his unfitness for the dirty and defiling work in which he was engaged. Be it so! But it may prove also that he happened to be surprised on that occasion, finding himself placed suddenly in a perilous situation, as the most accomplished and practised deceivers sometimes are. It is paraded also as a further proof of his ingenuousness and nobleness of character, that he avowed himself to General WASHINGTON to be the Adjutant General of the British army, and I do not arraign the correctness of the views of his eulogists, but will ask—What else could he have done as a prudent man but confess? Had concealment been practicable, what would it have availed him? Certainly nothing. On the contrary, it would have sealed at once his doom and have precipitated it. Had he persisted in maintaining his incognito, and passed himself off for a common, vulgar, venal spy, he would have been disposed of in a very summary manner.

"Short be the shrift and sure the cord!"

would have been the order; but being an officer of high rank and standing, a more formal mode of procedure was deemed advisable. The case was referred to a court-martial, which was composed of fourteen officers of the highest rank in the army—Americans and French—and never, in my opinion, before or since has a court been constituted for the trial of such a delinquent, so numerous, or of officers of such high rank, or more disposed to give full weight to any extenuating testimony that might be adduced by the prisoner, and certainly never did a military court, sitting for such a purpose, comport itself more indulgently towards the accused. Every latitude allowed by law or by usage, and much that was not, was enjoyed by him in the investigation, that every circumstance in any degree favorable to him might be brought within its cognizance. And never before or since did any commander-in-chief act on a similar occasion with more tenderness, or delicacy, or humanity, than did GENERAL WASHINGTON. But yet I do not credit the assertion that he wished to save ANDRE, or that he made an effort to do it, or that he would have consented to it unless ARNOLD could have been had in exchange for him, in which case, I have no doubt that the American army and the American people would all have been pleased at seeing the arch-traitor punished instead of his accomplice and coadjutor.

ANDRE's tragical fate seems to have been a favorite theme with the historians of the Revolution. All of them, I believe, have consigned ARNOLD to the infamy he deserved, and all, I believe, have commiserated ANDRE; almost all have eulogized, and some have exculpated him. He was in his life—at the close of it at least—unfortunate; after his death, the most fortunate of men—for certainly never before had the associate and accomplice of a traitor and a detected and acknowledged spy, so much

sympathy and so much lofty and eloquent eulogy bestowed upon him. And why? This question which I have asked myself many times, I have never been able satisfactorily to answer. He was talented, accomplished, amiable, and brave, say his eulogists, and I do not question it; but at the same time I am constrained to believe that the delinquency which brought him to an untimely end, was a great drawback upon the loftiness and chivalrousness of his character.

"One loose act will spoil a name for aye."

Had ANDRÉ appeared in the character of a spy only, his case, casuistically considered, would have been, in my opinion, a much better one than it is. Brave, honorable, and estimable men have appeared, under certain circumstances, in the character of spies—occasionally, but not habitually and professionally—but to be associated with such a vile traitor as ARNOLD, and to be the willing agent and instrument of his treason, is not compatible, it appears to me, with those refined and high-toned principles which have been so prodigally ascribed to him. There were many officers in the British army as brave and as ambitious as Major ANDRÉ, who, I have no doubt, would have indignantly spurned a proposition to be associated as a comploter of treason with ARNOLD, or to have advanced his treasonable projects in any way requiring disguise and duplicity; and fortunate had it been for the Adjutant General had he been of the number. In his moral composition there must have entered some laxity of principle, which influencing him to prefer what was expedient and profitable to what was honorable and high-minded, led to his own ruin instead of that of the glorious cause against which he had directed his dark and clandestine machinations. But, say his apologists, he had no intention when he left New York of acting as a spy, or of assuming a disguise. To which I answer, that may or may not be the case. There is no proof that it was, and if proven, it amounts to nothing. Had not his so-much-vaulted honor been formed of somewhat pliant and malleable stuff, he would neither have gone into the American lines, nor assumed a disguise, let what would have come of a refusal; and certain it is that he could have refused to do both without incurring the least personal risk. But then it would have been necessary to leave, unconsummated for the present, the treasonable project which he ascended the Hudson to further and to finish.

That is a pretty true saying of the French. *Ce n'est pas que le premier pas qui coule.* It is the first step only in iniquity that embarrasses. After becoming the correspondent and coadjutor of a blackhearted traitor, ANDRÉ's perception of what was right and what was wrong, of what was noble and high-minded, and what was not, became naturally obtuse and undiscriminating, for there is nothing truer in the whole science of ethics, than the old and time-tried adage, that *evil communication corrupts good manners*—that is, good morals; and there never has been, perhaps, a more remarkable exemplification of its truth than this very West Point tragedy.

It is said by some historians that the British

officers at New York looked with loathing upon ARNOLD after he had received a commission in the British army as the reward of his meditated treachery; that they avoided him, and refused in some cases to have any social relations with him; and to account for this avoidance and disgust requires the assumption of something more satisfactory than antipathy and resentment growing out of the share he had in the transaction that caused ANDRÉ's melancholy fate. To have felt and to have manifested this antipathy would have been unreasonable and cruel, unless they had loathed the traitor and his treason, as they did, no doubt; and could not have, I am inclined to think, the most exalted notions of the scrupulousness of him who was their victim, or rather the victim of his own unchastened ambition.\*

War is a game in the playing of which almost all kinds of stratagem and duplicity are allowable. The French phrase *ruse de guerre*—trick of war—has become vernacular in almost all the languages of Europe, and the thing itself of constant practice and recurrence. *Strategy* is the learned technical word, the generic term for all kinds of military operations—the *ruse de guerre* inclusive. One of these *ruses*, the employment of spies, has been legitimated, and he is regarded as the adroitest commander who can employ them most advantageously. The calling of a spy is not regarded as particularly reputable—I speak now of what may be called a professional spy—spying for pay being his trade and occupation. He is in general rather a loose kind of a character, not being over scrupulous in any respect, is bold, cunning, dexterous, and enterprising. Sometimes he is in the pay and confidence of both the commanders of hostile armies, and deceives both, or but one of them, it may be. This depends upon the quality of his conscience and upon the quantum of the consideration. His trade is rather a perilous one, and he carries it on generally with a halter round his neck, for the so-called laws of war, though very elaborate and learnedly compiled, afford him not the slightest protection. The vilest felon, the pirate, the traitor can appeal to the tribunals, but for the spy there is no appeal, except to Heaven's mercy seat. If he is successful and serviceable, he is rewarded—if caught he is hanged, and there ends the matter.

This being the status of *espionage*, it would be natural to suppose that men of principle and honor would never so far compromise themselves as to become spies; but this would be a mistake. They do sometimes act in that capacity, but from far different motives than those, which actuate the vulgar mercenary spy. Devotedness to their country or to a cherished cause, or fondness for adventure, or for "hair breadth 'scapes," or buoyancy of spirits, or an exuberance of personal daring, may influence them now and then to embark in this very ticklish occupation. It is not a very common thing though, in an army, for a commissioned officer to attempt it. No com-

\* Botta says that the English detested ARNOLD for his treason, and for having been the cause of ANDRÉ's death. (Gli Inglesi stessì il detestarono e pel suo tradimento e per essere stato cagione della morte d'ANDRÉ.)



mander would press him to do so, unless under very extraordinary circumstances, and no one ever counsels his friend to play the spy, for two reasons—because of the danger to which he must expose himself of dying the death of a felon, and because, in the bosom of every honorable man, there is an abiding repugnance to the duplicity and disguise, which must be resorted to by a spy, even when acting as such, under the most praiseworthy and justifying circumstances. This repugnance, we are told, was felt by ANDRE, but the Devil, who is always present when treason is concocting, prevailed upon him to stifle the nascent sentiment. He did so, and discovery and destruction followed. The “amiable spy,” as he is called by his countryman, CHARLES LAMB, (Elia) though possessing many good and estimable qualities—I am willing to admit—lacked one that would have adorned those he had—high and uncompromising principle.

GENERAL WASHINGTON said of ANDRE, that “he met his fate with that fortitude, which was to be expected from an accomplished man and a gallant officer.”

CHIEF JUSTICE MARSHALL (Life of Washington) speaks of ANDRE’S “candor, openness and magnanimity;”—says he was “only mindful of his fame, disdained evasion, and rendered the examination of any witness unnecessary.”

BOTTA says, (History of the War of Independence) that before the court, he (ANDRE) spoke with admirable candor, confessing more than he was asked;—that “he died with that fortitude that belongs to brave and virtuous men, and that he was worthy of a better fate.” [Cosi fu tratto a giusta ma indegna morte un dabben giovine meritevole in tutto di miglior destino.]

MR. SPARKS says, (Life of Washington) that “the conduct of ANDRE was marked with a candor, self-possession and dignity, which betokens a brave and noble spirit.”

To these authorities—all Americans, except BOTTA, who, though an Italian, had an obvious leaning to the American cause—I will add a few extracts from English authors.

BISSET says, in his *Reign of George the Third*, “the only evidence of the fact was ANDRE’S own admission. Not only humanity, but justice required that his evidence, if allowed such weight against him, should also be allowed in his favor, and that his declaration of pure intention ought to be considered as well as his acknowledgement of an act contrary to the laws of war.”

“If criminality is to be estimated by intention, he was put to death without any proofs of guilty design, and with the strongest presumptions of innocence.”

“The death of ANDRE, which WASHINGTON could have prevented, will certainly, in future ages be regarded as a dark spot in the bright character of the American General.”

ADOLPHUS says, in his *History of England*, that “ANDRE went on shore with a flag of truce—that he had neither advocate, witness, nor friend on the spot.” [at his trial]

“LAFAYETTE urged the fate of the unfortunate captive, with unremitting malignity.”

“In the opinion of all liberal and generous minded men, the manner of the execution (ANDRE’S) was infinitely more disgraceful to those who inflicted, than to him who suffered it.”

The Reverend T. S. HUGHES says, (History of England.) “As the Board intended to govern itself entirely by his answers to their interrogatories, by means of these reiterated and modified, they extracted from the unfortunate prisoner, something like an acknowledgement that he could not return on board the Vulture, under the sanction of the flag which brought him ashore.”

“LAFAYETTE is said to have urged on the fate of the unfortunate captive with a malignity, hardly to be reconciled with his chivalrous character.”

The following is an extract from WADE’S *British Chronology*.—“Oct. 2, 1780: MAJOR ANDRE hanged as a spy by the Americans. He had been detected in the American lines with a false passport, disguised in plain clothes, and the papers found on him, shewed that he had been employed in negotiating the infamous treachery of GENERAL ARNOLD, to betray his position at West Point, and troops to the British general.

BAXTER, in his *History of England*, says:—“And soon as he (ANDRE) found whose hands he was in, he offered them a purse of gold and a valuable watch, if they would suffer him to escape, with promises of present provision and future promotion, &c., but these honest provincials refused his bribe.”

“ANDRE was tried by a board of officers, French and American, and executed as a spy.”

Thus write some of the British historians of this transaction. Comment would be thrown away on BISSET and ADOLPHUS, for I doubt whether as much untruth, as much unmixed stupidity and nonsense, and rabid rancor can any where be found in the same number of lines in any book, purporting to be history. And the reverend historian, MR. HUGHES, is not far behind them. He conveys the idea, that ANDRE’S confessions, artfully extracted by the Court, were the only proofs of guilt, and that upon these he was condemned! He confessed it is true, and voluntarily enough to convict him, but nothing that was material, that could not have been proven. What his Reverence and the rest say about LAFAYETTE’S “malignity,” merits but little notice. Such a charge against such a man requires neither denial nor refutation, nor remark.

It is worthy of being remarked, that whilst some of the English historians were writing in this calumniating style of WASHINGTON, and of the illustrious heroes of our Revolution, and long after the event, the American historians were putting into requisition all their ability and all their eloquence, to elevate and adorn the character, and to consecrate the memory of an English spy—the accomplice and co-conspirator of an American traitor.—Magnanimity is without doubt, a noble sentiment, but when I think of all this, it half inclines me to believe, that it is possible to be too magnanimous.

WADSWORTH's remarks are succinct, unornamented and impartial. He states the fact without circumlocution and without commentary, evidently regarding the subject, as one not calling for amplification, and not justifying any elaborate display of eloquence and pathos.—BAXTER has written in about the same spirit, and has borne honorable testimony to the integrity of the 'honest provincials' who captured ANDRE. The two last have written like historians; the two first like bitter and unscrupulous partisans.

I come now to the American accounts, and in the face of such names and such authority, it would be preposterous were I disposed, to deny that ANDRE possessed in a great degree, the good and prepossessing qualities so liberally ascribed to him. Nevertheless I cannot but believe that a deliberate and dispassionate analysis of the facts, and of the documents relating to his case would lead an impartial investigator to the conclusion that his conduct was not distinguished by that perfect ingenuousness and chivalrous abandonment of self attributed to him so eloquently by some, so proselytically by almost all.

In his letter written to GENERAL WASHINGTON, the day after his capture, ANDRE says, his object in writing is to "vindicate his fame"—its vindication being necessary in consequence of the "equivocal position in which he had placed himself"—that it was against his "stipulation and intention" that he "was conducted within one of the American posts"—that he "was betrayed into the vile condition of an enemy in disguise within your posts"—that he "was involuntarily an impostor;"—and that what he says, "is true on the honor of an officer and a gentleman." And in his written statement to the Court Martial he says, that SIR HENRY CLINTON's directions were "not to go within an enemy's post or quit his own dress"—that ARNOLD made him put the papers between his stockings and his feet.—These papers, let it be remembered, were a detailed description of West Point, the strength of the garrison, dispositions &c., &c., which in the hands of SIR HENRY CLINTON, with the co-operation of ARNOLD, would have rendered the capture of that most important post, no very arduous or hazardous undertaking.

Now, from this explanation or vindication, or defence or whatever it is, it is clearly deducible that MAJOR ANDRE was not altogether indisposed to exculpate himself by inculpating others. The "head and front of the offending" is laid at ARNOLD's door, though SIR HENRY CLINTON and he were willing and active participants in the intrigue, and just as guilty as it was possible for alien enemies to be. ANDRE was not generous enough either to do justice to his captors, whom he accused of plundering him, saying that he was "rifled by the three volunteers." The word *rifle* means to take feloniously, to plunder; and was not applicable to those incorruptible men. They did no more than their duty in searching him closely, and what they *rifled* from him was the papers that ARNOLD "made" him put between his stockings and his feet. How could ARNOLD make him put them there? And how

and by whom was he betrayed into the vile condition of a spy?

MAJOR ANDRE says that he was "involuntarily an impostor." Now it appears to me that the annals of military stratagem and imposture cannot exhibit a case where the volition has been more complete, more deliberate, more undeniable. For eighteen months he had been in correspondence with ARNOLD, eliciting from time to time, information useful to the British commander, and concerting measures preparatory to the surrender. An interview is necessary for the purpose of making arrangements for the consummation of the atrocious conspiracy, and ANDRE not choosing to confide to another, plans and projects which he had so adroitly and so successfully matured, or not choosing to divide with another, the credit and recompense which would naturally and certainly follow success; determines to visit ARNOLD in person and to arrange every thing himself for giving promptly and effectually the *coup de grace* to the American cause. He meets the traitor, his correspondent Gustavis, who conducts him within the American lines, and the latter goes not reluctantly and resistingly, but assumes at once, the calling and responsibilities of a spy by assuming a disguise; and from that moment his life was justly forfeited if caught, without the superadded aggravation of the treasonable practices of which he was art and part while at West Point. Yet all this was against his "stipulation" he says, and against the "directions" of SIR HENRY CLINTON. Yet he does it all without the shadow of compulsion or necessity. The truth is most obviously, that, apprehending no danger and looking to the end only, without regarding the means, he was alike forgetful of the rules of honorable warfare, the dictates of prudence and the injunctions of his commanding general. And had success attended his machinations, certainly we should never then have heard a word about his amability; his high sense of honor; his sensitiveness about his fame; his unfitness for the occupation of a spy, and of his detestation of imposture. Oh, no! But we should have heard as miserable and oppressed, and down trodden, and crouching colonists, to this day it might have been, of the glorious, daring and heroic achievement of MAJOR ANDRE, which put an end to the revolutionary struggle, and brought back the revolting colonies to their allegiance.

I do not assume that the revolutionary cause would have failed even had ARNOLD and ANDRE succeeded; probably it would not, but the negative cannot be assumed either. It can never be known of course, what the effect upon the contest would have been; certainly it would have been very serious; for besides the loss of such a position as West Point, a large quantity of military stores and a considerable number of troops, the moral effect would have been incalculably injurious. It could not then have been known to what extent the American officers were contaminated by the spirit of disaffection and disloyalty. Consternation, distrust and despair would have been universal, and it might not have been possible to remedy the disaster or to stem the reflux tide. But Heaven ordered otherwise, and whilst the holy

cause of freedom was sustained, the peril in which it had been placed, furnishes the brightest page to be found in all human history. That page is the one where is recorded the ever glorious fact, that during a bloody civil war of six or seven years, of the thousands of commissioned officers who fought on the side of Liberty, amidst all the fluctuations of the contest, in defeat and in the face of the apparent ruin of their cause; in nakedness and starvation, and amidst all the wants and privations that can afflict human nature; in the dungeon; in the British prison-ships, and on the scaffold, there was to be found but one, only one solitary traitor, "ARNOLD," says CHIEF JUSTICE MARSHALL, "remains the solitary instance of an American officer who abandoned the side first embraced in this civil contest, and turned his sword upon his former companions in arms."

BOTTA says, that "on his trial ANDRE confessed more than was asked." This may be true and yet establish nothing in his favor—not even the self-sacrificing frankness which some of the historians have so elaborately eulogized. Had he confessed any thing unfavorable to himself that could not have been proved, then the eulogies would have been more pertinent. But this was not the case, for there were witnesses, to establish every material fact as he well knew. A confession then might have had for its object to produce a favorable impression on the court, by a show of candor, and it did produce it; whereas, a contumacious denial and a captious course on the part of the prisoner could not have benefitted him, there being proof enough *abunde*, as the lawyers say, to establish his guilt. Nevertheless, his conduct at his trial was certainly such as to do him honor as a man and as an officer. Pity 'tis that it had ever been otherwise.

If I have not been able to perceive in the character and conduct of MAJOR ANDRE, all the amiableness and excellence, and surpassing endowments, with which some historians have invested him, my failure is to be imputed to natural obtuseness and want of perspicacity, and not to a disposition to be illiberal, because he was an Englishman, and the enemy of my country. I long ago formed the opinion that he was morbidly and madly ambitious, and that his ambition was not exactly of the legitimate kind—of that kind that incites to the performance of high and chivalrous deeds in the face of day, and of the enemy, scorning all that is covert and crafty. Compared with the Duguesclins and Bayards of France and the Sydneys, Hampdens and Falklands of his own country—all of his own profession—he seems to me to fall far in the rear of those noble and heroic men. He was not like them *sans peur et sans reproche*. Without fear he was, but not without reproach, for his connexion with ARNOLD and participation in his treason, leaving out even that he was a spy, has left an ineffaceable stain upon his character as posterity will be apt to decide I think, notwithstanding the pathetic declamation and rhetorical flourishes of contemporary historians.

I repeat, that ARNOLD's being an Englishman and the enemy of my country, has not in any

manner influenced my opinion with respect to him. SIR GUY CARLETON was the same, and so far would that humane and noble-minded man have been from playing such a part in such a game as the one played between ARNOLD and ANDRE, that I doubt much whether he would have acted the part even of employer and principal, as SIR HENRY did. He was an honor to his profession; to his country, and to human nature, and among the passages in the history of our revolution, which can be read with more pleasure, are those where we find recorded his humane and generous conduct towards our countrymen, who fell into his hands after the unsuccessful attack upon Quebec, in 1775. He was able too, as well as brave and generous, and had the command of the army which surrendered at Saratoga, been given to him instead of being given to the gasconading Burgoyne, it would not have been lost probably. He was entitled to the command and wished to have it, but the British ministry setting aside the claims and services of the able man of merit, gave it to the plausible and courtly braggart. At that time, fortunately or providentially, for the cause of Liberty, the British monarch, his ministers, and the majority in Parliament, seemed to be all struck with judicial blindness; and, whoever, reads the history of that period, beginning ten or twelve years before the commencement of the great struggle, cannot fail to remark the inefficiency and inaptitude of the men and measures, policy and proceedings of the British government with respect to American affairs. With an infatuation and short-sightedness, rarely paralleled, they seemed to make a point of doing all that they should not do, and of leaving undone all that they should do. They stumbled not by chance even on a solitary measure that was politic or expedient, and true to the single idea of reducing the colonies to unconditional submission, they blundered on from absurdity to absurdity, until they brought the relations between the two countries to such a state, that the questions at issue admitted of no settlement, solution or remedy, but an appeal to arms.

Having now said more than I intended to say about MAJOR ANDRE, I will say something about an American officer who also met an untimely fate, having subjected himself likewise to be treated as a spy by venturing within the British lines. This was CAPTAIN NATHAN HALE. He was young, intelligent and ardent, generous and intrepid; resembling ANDRE in many points of his character, but superior to him in patriotism and single mindedness. After the battle of Long Island, willing to risk all for his country, whose affairs were then very critical, against the advice of his friends, he approached the British camp with the view of getting information and of observing the dispositions of the royal army. He was discovered, captured, hastily examined and very summarily executed; and I wish it could be added that the same delicacy and humanity were displayed in his case that were afterwards in ANDRE's. But they were not. Poor HALE instead of awakening in the bosoms of those into whose hands he had fallen, sentiments of sympathy and compassion, was hurried with brutal haste to the scaffold—denied the privilege of writing

to his friends or even the use of a bible, and amidst the scorn and mocking of the soldiers, branded as a traitor and a spy was launched into eternity. But firm and courageous as he was patriotic, these cruel and studied insults moved him not. And in my opinion as well as in that of a more competent judge, (Mr. SPARKS.) His last words "embodied a nobler and more sublime sentiment" as Mr. SPARKS says, than ANDRE's, and betokened it appears to me much more concentration of mind and elevation of soul. ANDRE's last thought was for himself, HALE's for his country. ANDRE's solicitude was for his fame, as his so much applauded speech demonstrates. He called upon those around him to bear witness that he died like a brave man, and so undoubtedly he did die, and I would be very sorry to disparage the sentiment that was predominant in his mind, but in preferring the calm and modest and unostentatious manner in which HALE met his fate, I do not think I disparage it. He asked no body to bear witness to his courage—that showed for itself, as did ANDRE's. Higher and more ennobling thoughts occupied his last moments, and it seems to me that among all the recorded deaths of heroes and patriots there cannot be found one more touching or more deserving of everlasting remembrance than his. "I only lament," he said, "that I have but one life to lose for my country."—To the deep devotedness, the noble self-abandonment of these few words, it would be difficult to add any thing that would improve them.

Now mark the cause of human and historic justice! ANDRE descends to the tomb accompanied by the regrets, the admiration and the sympathies of two great nations—one an enemy. His virtues, his valor and his untimely death are recorded on marble monuments and commemorated in eloquent and elaborate prose, and in yet more elaborate poetry, (the *Monody*.) The historians of the two hostile countries vie with each other in embalming his memory, and the rivalry among them seems to be, which of them should say of him the most laudatory things, and should say them best. They pity, they praise, they admire him, reserving for ARNOLD the outpourings of their indignation, and richly did he deserve all they have said of him, and I marvel not, that they have made him so hateful and revolting, but that they have made his co-adjutor and co-traitor so amiable and so peerless. Co-traitor I say, for such he was by the laws then and would be by the laws now; for it cannot be doubted, I presume, that an alien enemy coming voluntarily and without constraint or duress of any kind, within the jurisdiction of a country, and whilst there sojourning is guilty of treasonable practices, is punishable by the civil law for the civil offence.

But what do these eloquent and magnanimous writers say of HALE? Scarcely a word. If he is mentioned at all by our native historians even, he is very briefly mentioned, and they who have whole pages to bestow upon ANDRE, have scarcely a line to give to their equally brave and meritorious, and amiable and much more disinterested fellow-countryman. This indifference, or this negligence, or this want of information is enough to make one exclaim with VOLTAIRE—

*Voilà justement comment on écrit l'histoire!* \*

For poor HALE there has been

"Nor storied urn nor animated bust."

For him no Monodies have been written, no monument erected, no generous enemy whilst recording his fate, has recorded his virtues and his merit, transmitting to posterity the story of his tragic fate and heroic enthusiasm. Of him there are but meagre historical reminiscences, besides Mr. SPARKS's just and eloquent tribute to his memory, with the concluding paragraph of which I will close the subject. Mr. SPARKS says: "But whatever may have been the parallel between these two individuals while living, it ceased with their death. A monument was raised and consecrated to the memory of ANDRE, by the bounty of a grateful sovereign. His ashes have been removed from the obscure resting place, transported across the ocean, and deposited with the remains of the illustrious dead, in Westminster Abbey. Where is the memento of the virtues, the patriotic sacrifice, the early fate of HALE! It is not inscribed in marble; it is scarcely recorded in books. Let it be more deeply cherished in the hearts of his countrymen."

Were this letter—already too long—much longer, I could not resolve to close it, without saying a few more words about the captors of ANDRE,—JOHN PATERLING, DAVID WILLIAMS and ISAAC VAN WERT, whose names cannot be too often repeated by an American. Whilst another high in rank and rich in reputation, was a false traitor and renegade; these individuals without rank and unknown to fame, were faithful to their country's cause which it may be, they saved. They were men in respectable but humble life, without pretensions, without influence, without wealth, but rich in that glorious purity of principle, which comes from Heaven. Upon how slender a thread seemed to hang the whole great cause!—upon the integrity of three, obscure, rustic militiamen—perhaps of one, and yet how secure it was! I believe that those three men would have refused as unhesitatingly, all the rank and gold promised to ARNOLD, by SIR HENRY CLINTON; as they did the offers and promises of ANDRE; and this shows that there is no rock so firm, no panoply so impenetrable, no ark of safety so sure, as an honest man's patriotism.

But these great benefactors of their country, if not her saviours.—How were they rewarded? Not as liberally, I grieve to say, as they ought to have been. Their country was not ungrateful it is true; but, there was no great munificence, it must be confessed, in her manifestations of gratitude. An appropriate medal was struck and presented to them, and a pension granted to each, of two hundred dollars annually for life, and this was all, I believe,—“a reward, it must be admitted,” says CHIEF JUSTICE MARSHALL, “much more accurately apportioned to the poverty of the public treasury, than to the service which had been received.”

Yours sincerely,

J. C. PICKETT.

FRANCIS MARKOE, Jr., Esq.,

Cor. Sec. of the Nat. Institute.

\*Behold, after what manner history is written!

# MATE, OR TEA OF PARAGUAY.

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LIMA, OCTOBER 20, 1844.

DEAR SIR: I now send to the United States the apparatus I mentioned in a former letter, for taking what is generally called in South America, *maté*, the tea of Paraguay. It is a small silver vessel, holding less than half a pint, rather more like an urn than a cup, and a silver tube nine or ten inches long, called a *bombilla*, [little pump,] with small perforations for the admission of the liquid at the large end, and the other entirely open, which is taken in the mouth.

The word *maté*, applied to the tea, is in strictness a misnomer, and signified originally, and still does, the cup in which the herb or leaf is prepared. This herb is called *yerba maté*, or *yerba del Paraguay*, in Spanish, and its present botanical name is, if I mistake not, *ilex paraguayensis*. It is found in the dense and almost impenetrable forests of Paraguay, whence comes nearly all that is used, I believe; for, though it is found in Brazil of an inferior quality, I am not aware that it is now exported largely. It was in former years. The tree is rather a small one, not exceeding the orange tree in height, and is of all sizes under that.

For making the tea *maté* the leaves and the small twigs are gathered, dried by fire on a kind of kiln, called a *barbacua*, imperfectly pulverized in a "rough wooden mill," as Robertson,\* who describes all the processes, calls it, packed firmly and rammed with a wooden maul into a raw-hide bag, called *zurron*, containing between two hundred and two hundred and fifty pounds, and is then ready for market. One hand can gather and prepare two hundred pounds daily, and it costs in the forest about one cent per pound, but is sold at Lima nearly as high as China tea. But, if it were as cheap as it might be, perhaps nobody would use it, for costliness seems to be a necessary complement to give zest to a luxury which, if cheap, is despised. The Chinese pay for birds' nests their weight in silver, or more, which, though not the revolting dish by any means that some suppose, yet would not be eaten, probably, if they could be had for nothing. The *otio* or *attar* of roses is undeniably a most fragrant perfume, but its being worth its weight in gold adds much to its exquisiteness, I suspect. If frogs at Paris cost fifty times as much as they do, they would be a *recherché* dish all over Europe, for they are certainly most delicious eat-

ing—so all say that try them. The ancient Romans carried the absurdity of expensive dishes, which had nothing but their costliness to recommend them, further, perhaps, than any other people ever did, but this was in the days of their decadence and degeneracy.

Of the Paraguay tea the exportation was formerly very great, and is yet considerable, I suppose, though from various causes it has greatly fallen off. The amount has been stated at from five to eight millions of pounds. The consumption in La Plata, Chili, and both Perus was once enormous, and it is still used pretty freely, with the exception of Lower Peru, of which Lima is the capital, where it has been superseded to a great extent by chocolate and coffee, and by the herb of China, our tea, which seems to be destined to acquire an influence and popularity never before acquired, I imagine, by the leaf of any tree or plant. If it has a rival, it is tobacco, and I think it little creditable to human reason or to human good taste that such a rivalry exists, or may be even supposed to exist—the one a nauseous and poisonous narcotic, the other an innocent, elegant, and somewhat exhilarating beverage.

Having gathered, and dried, and packed, and exported the *maté* or *yerba*, we will now proceed to the preparation of it for use, which is very summary and very simple. As I have sent you a small quantity, you can try it for yourself, following my recipe, viz: Put into the cup a spoonful of the *yerba*, with as much sugar as you choose, then fill with hot water, and in a few moments it is ready for suction. It is never drank as we drink the tea of China; put in the *bombilla*, and suck gently, not rapidly and gormandizingly, but in a soft and insinuating manner, as though you would rather coax than coerce the liquid into your mouth. The holes of the *bombilla* I send are rather large, and let in too much of the *yerba*, which ought to be excluded as much as possible. At the top of the tube a piece of reed, or something hollow and non-conducting, is usually inserted. The sugar used with the *yerba* is generally burnt by being put on coals for a few moments. This adds considerably to the flavor. Some add, also, a little lemon or orange-peel, or cinnamon, or any thing they fancy; and some there are who take it without sugar or other appliance—a pure and unsophisticated decoction or infusion—the hot water and *yerba*, and nothing more. Thus prepared, it is called *cimarron*, literally *wild*, meaning in the state in which it comes from the woods.

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\* Letters from Paraguay.

"Those who take it so are called *materos*, and are "hardened and shameless" *maté* takers, as Dr. Johnson said of his addictedness to tea. One cup is the quantity generally taken; but some veterans, "the hardened and shameless," go as high as ten or twelve, which is running into excess. There is, however, in imagination or in fact, a redeeming concomitant that accompanies this intemperance. *Maté* is said to be both a preventive and a remedy for the dropsy, and I have been assured that a *matero* was never known to die of that disease, or to be afflicted with it. I have some doubts about this myself, and give it just as I got it, neither vouching, affirming, nor denying.

A *maté* is a kind of small gourd, or the production of a cucurbitaceous plant, which was the first cup used; and hence the name. But now behold the progress of luxury! First, a gourd was used for a cup, with a reed probably for a tube; then a cocoa-nut shell, mounted in silver; next, pure silver, and a silver bombilla; and, finally, which is the *ne plus ultra*, so far, both of gold. In our tea-drinking, however, we may trace a similar progress in refinement, though the extremes are not quite so far apart, because metallic vessels have never been much used, or not generally, for taking tea; they are so where preferred, I believe. The distance, though, between the plain and unpretending pottery from which tea was taken when first introduced into Europe, and the superb and costly porcelain now used, is pretty considerable. The *maté* and the tea remain the same, but the vessels in which it is taken have undergone many changes in form, fashion, and material. Nature is fixed and unchanging; man is whimsical, desultory, and "studious of change." With him nothing is fixed except a fixed determination to unfix, unhinge, and innovate, whenever and wherever he can.

As I wish to tell the truth, the whole truth, about *maté*, I must disclose the fact that it is sometimes taken in a manner not in accordance with our northern ideas of delicacy and refinement; but which custom not only tolerates in South America, but sanctions. I must first premise that the higher classes in among the Spanish Americans are of polished manners, refined habits, and *au fait* as respects the current conventionalities of social life; but they do, nevertheless, sometimes, as many as three or four, suck, not sip, the *yerba* from the same tube, without replenishing or cleaning. This to us would seem rather free and easy, and sociable, if not offensive—*un tant soit peu*. But "use reconciles," as Charles Lamb says; and here, where it is the custom, it excites no disgust, because it is the custom, and besides the bombilla is often pressed by lips to which an ascetic would not be unwilling to follow suite, and would hasten to apply his own before the aroma had exhaled. They are not all so fragrant, however. It is not much more philosophical, it appears to me, to dispute about customs than about taste. The South American takes *maté* out of the same cup with his friends, which a North American might say was disgusting; but he of the North would perhaps discharge a shower of "tobacco tinctured saliva," as Dickens euphuistically calls it, on a fine carpet, without the least compunc-

tion or thought, which he of the South would regard as little less than atrocious, because he does not *chew*; not that he is guiltless of tobacco by any means; for he has a cigar in his mouth about fourteen hours of the twenty-four, and would smoke you to death with the greatest composure in the world, only wondering that tobacco smoke could be disagreeable to any body.

I am going to make a few remarks about tea (of China) whatever merit or excellence there may be in the Asiatic plant, there are certainly others that are equal in every respect to it, if not superior, and want nothing but the suffrage of the fashionable to bring them into use—such as sage, balm, sassafras, &c., in the United States; but this suffrage these vulgar domestic productions can never have, because they can be had for nothing; and, as Burke said of vice, that by taking away its grossness you take away half its evil, [which I do not admit,] so take away the costliness of luxury and you take away half or rather all its charm. Not long ago volumes were written in praise of *sage*, [saliza;] Latin odes were addressed to it; it was styled the queen of plants, the paragon of the vegetable world; and the learned and scientific vied with each other in exalting its wonderful virtues. It was considered in medicine to be almost a panacea, and the "sovereignest thing on earth" for a multitude of ailments. But now, who hears of sage among the scientific or the fashionable? *Troja fuit*. It is said, though, to be still highly esteemed in China. Sassafras, too, is famous, both for its aromatic and its medicinal qualities, and I have known some wealthy persons to prefer it (the root and bark of the root) to the leaf of China; but they were *rara nantes in gurgite vasto*, and had but few imitators; for not many have the courage to avow a preference for a cheap domestic luxury when a costly foreign one can be had. What is exotic is preferred to the home produced, because it is expensive—not because it is always better. I have drank cinnamon tea in South America; but do not recollect to have ever seen it in the United States. It is very pleasant to the taste and perfectly innoxious, I suppose. This list might be greatly extended; but I have said enough to be said in a hasty, careless, desultory letter.

I have not the slightest intention of disparaging the tea of China, and although I think substitutes might be found equal in every good quality, and infinitely cheaper, yet, unless something should come in its place, I would not willingly see a pound less of it used; on the contrary, I would be glad to see the consumption of it much greater than it is; for, in my opinion, it is something more and something better than its great advocate, Dr. S. JOHNSON, contended for against JONAS HANWAY, its assailant, who pronounced it to be "pernicious." The doctor's defence did much for the cause of tea-drinking, but it does not appear to me to be among the happiest of the many happy efforts of his gigantic mind. He was, as he avows, a hardened tea-drinker, who scarcely allowed his kettle time to cool, and, yet, much of his vindication of his favorite beverage is but very "fair-raise." He re-

futes, triumphantly, HANWAY's assertion, that it was pernicious, but he admits, that it was but a "watery luxury," a "barren superfluity;" that tea is "a liquor not proper for the lower classes, as it supplies no strength to labor, and that its proper use is to amuse the idle and relax the studious." Had he lived to this day, he would not now probably make a single one of these admissions. I do not. Tea, as generally taken with cream and sugar, is something more than watery and barren, and imparts in some degree both aliment and animation; for, although the doctor admits too, that it is not exhilarating, yet, the accompaniments generally are, which amounts to about the same thing. It seems to me, that cheerfulness and good humour, almost, always prevail at the tea table, not it may be, because the tea is drunk, but because people meet for the purpose of drinking it, and of enjoying each other's society. But, be this as it may, tea has the merit of being the cause of those agreeable re-unions round the tea table; for, if there were no tea, there would be no tea table, and nothing of those pleasant relaxations, so indispensable to those who have once acquired the habit of them.

When DR. JOHNSON said, tea was not a liquor proper for the lower classes, the circumstances of that day should be considered. He said this nearly a hundred years ago, when tea was dear, and the use of it confined almost, entirely to those who claimed to belong, from rank or wealth or occupation, to the higher classes. He says, that tea was introduced into England, in 1666, and was sold at three pounds sterling per pound, which, allowing for the reduced value of money, would be equal now, perhaps, to thirty or forty dollars. The price had been greatly reduced, it is true, when he wrote, but tea was still costly, and scarcely within the reach of the poor, and might be said *then*, with some plausibility, not to be "proper" for them. But times have greatly changed, and, since the Doctor wrote, many things that were then acknowledged luxuries, are now regarded as absolute necessities, and tea from the universality of its consumption, may be assumed to be one of them. An act of Parliament 'repudiating' the whole national debt might be submitted to in England, but one prohibiting the use of tea would produce a revolution probably.

It is my opinion, then, that tea or an equivalent—any elegant, innocent, socializing, quasi-exhilarating (not intoxicating) beverage—is of far too much value in the world to be designated, if not stigmatized, as a "watery luxury," a mere "barren superfluity;" and though, as Dr. J. said, it may be neither, "medicinal nor nutritious, nor supplies strength nor cheerfulness, nor relieves weariness nor exhilarates sorrow," (not all of which is true *me judice*), yet still I cannot but think that in some degree it exercises a kind of civilizing,

refining influence, among tea-drinking nations. It is a nice and elegant potation; all the processes for the preparation of it are cleanly, the apparatus for drinking it, and accompaniments are elegant; it is suggestive of elegant ideas, and promotive very often of elegant conversation, and "engenders good feeling and consolidates society," as DR. JOHNSON said about card-playing, but which he might more properly have said about tea-drinking; for every body can drink tea without any compunctious visitings of conscience," I suppose; but not all can or will, or should play cards, and, indeed, comparatively very few. Scandal, it may be said, is too often heard at the tea table—and it is true, I dare say; but this proves nothing. The fault is not in the tea; those who indulge in scandal there, indulge in it elsewhere, and every where.

I think I can venture to express the opinion, that there is not, never was, and perhaps never will be, a decidedly tea-drinking people who are at the same time gross and vulgar, considered under the aspect of national character. Either use of tea refines and improves, or the refinement previously existing will lead to the use of tea, and the first is most common, I think. The beer-drinking of the English is greatly redeemed by their tea-drinking, and as they drink less of beer and more of tea, in the same ratio their social and moral habits and propensities will be improved. And there is another Anglo-Saxon nation, whose tobacco-chewing, &c., is greatly redeemed, also, by its tea-drinking; and I take the liberty of saying to the legislators of this last nation, that tea is the last article upon which an import duty ought to be laid. Let them lay it on heavy upon ardent spirits, and upon every thing that has alcohol in it; but tea should not be taxed, unless fiscal necessities imperiously demand it. But, *jam satis*—of tea and tea-drinking.

To the *maté*-cup I send you there is a top—why, I might have explained sooner. It is a travelling-cup, and has, therefore, a narrow mouth and a cover. With a small and light boiler and a spirit-lamp, the *maté* could be taken by the way-farer at any time or at any place, in the desert, on a mountain fifteen thousand feet high, or even on horseback or muleback. But it was seldom taken, I imagine, in the last manner, though so, to take it, would be perfectly practicable. I mention this, by way of throwing out a hint to my ingenious, time-economising fellow-countrymen. Those who travel on horseback, if they could boil their kettle and take their tea without stopping, might refresh themselves with that beverage *ad libitum* and lose no time; and so of those who travel in coaches and on railroads.

I am, very respectfully, yours,

J. C. PICKETT.

FRANCIS MARKOE, Jr., Esq.,  
Washington.

# GUANO, OR HUANO.

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WASHINGTON CITY, AUG. 22, 1845.

DEAR SIR: Finding on my return recently to the United States, after an absence of seven years, that the article called *guano* has attracted considerable attention among our citizens, particularly among those devoted to agriculture and horticulture, I have concluded to trouble you with a communication upon the subject. I have resided several years in the country (Peru) where that manure most abounds; and having picked up a little information about it, it may be in my power, possibly, to say something that is new, but not much, I fear, that will be interesting.

*Guano*, or *huano*, as it is now written in Peru, (the *h* not aspirated,) but originally with the *g*, is, as is known to every body, the excrement of sea-fowl, in the condition, chemically considered, to be used in agriculture at once, and without any previous preparation, as manure. The word *huano* is applied also to all kinds of animal excrement entirely or partially decomposed; and dry, pulverulent mules, and horses' dung used for mixing with mortar, or for packing ice to be sent from the snowy mountains to the hot country below, is called *huano* too; and it is an excellent non-conductor.

Guano is more abundant, I presume, on the coast of Peru than in any other country, and of a superior quality, for which it is not difficult to assign very satisfactory reasons. The principal one is, that on the coast it does not rain as it does in most other intertropical regions; and thus one great obstacle to its accumulation and preservation is removed, or, to speak more accurately, does not exist. For this reason (as I suppose) all the *guano* either already found, or to be found, in countries where it rains much, will contain, pound for pound, less fertilizing matter than the Peruvian *guano*. This is the case with that brought from Ichaboe, on the coast of Africa, which is of an inferior quality, and commands in England only about two-thirds of the price at which the other is sold. That heavy and frequent rains would produce this deteriorating effect, appears to me to be very probable; and I can almost venture to predict that, for this reason, the *guano* said to be lately discovered on the coast of Florida, will be found also to be inferior to the Peruvian. It will be, though, notwithstanding, a most valuable manure, I have no doubt; and if it exists in large quantities, and is easy of access, it will be of more

value to our country than all our gold mines and gold washings together; which I, who have lived long in countries abounding in gold and silver mines, am inclined to think are, nationally considered, of no benefit to any country—that they do not contribute either to its wealth, its health, its morals, or its happiness. I speak only of the mines of the precious metals. Of those of iron, copper, lead, &c., I have a different opinion; though they, too, sometimes occasion much wild and ruinous experiment and speculation.

I have said that it does not rain in Peru where *guano* is found. I will explain. At Lima, in 12 deg. 2 min. S. latitude, and for some hundreds of miles to the north and to the south, and until the Cordilleras (the high mountains of the Andes) are reached, from 60 to 70 or 80 miles, rain, as known in our country, is a phenomenon of very rare occurrence. It may happen once or twice in a century at Lima, and once in four or five years on the part of the coast five or six hundred miles farther north; and then along the sea shore, where nothing is seen generally but dry barren sand, unblest by any visible trace of vegetation, there springs up suddenly, as if by enchantment, a tolerable growth of grass and wild flowers. Nevertheless, Captain Belcher, of the British navy, distinguished as a navigator and hydrographer, says in his work "*Cruise in the Sulphur*," that he had been told it never rained at Lima; but that he heard (in July and August, 1838,) at that place "heavy pattering of rain, and saw heavy streams issuing from the tops of houses, and traversing the streets." This to me is inexplicable. I resided at Lima about six years, and never heard any of this "pattering," or saw any of these "heavy streams;" and I inquired particularly of intelligent and observant persons if they had seen all this in 1838. They replied that they had not—never had seen such things—never had heard of them, and yet those persons had resided many years at Lima. I have seen, indeed, whole floods of water "issuing from the tops of houses," thrown during the carnival, by merry and mischievous persons, upon those passing along the streets, and some of it not altogether as sweet and transparent as it comes from the clouds; and I have seen, too, daily, "heavy streams" running along the gutters in the centre of the streets; but as it is impossible that Captain Belcher could have mistaken



these for a shower of rain, I am wholly at a loss to account for his statement, so at variance with the experience of others. I have seen also, every year—and always in the month of December, I think—a fall of rain for a few moments, composed of enormous drops, perhaps half an inch in diameter, falling ten or fifteen feet apart; but not enough of it to wet any thing, or to be avoided. This depended, of course, upon a peculiar state of the atmosphere, and upon electrical phenomena; to the solution of which I did not feel equal, and do not now; and leave it, therefore, unsolved.

It will not do, though, to say that it does not rain at Lima, without saying what it does do in the way of precipitating humidity. From the last of May to the month of December, there falls a considerable quantity of water from the heavens, in the shape of mist, or rather what we call drizzle. It falls generally in the night-time; and in consequence of it, the streets are often inconveniently muddy of a morning. What quantity is precipitated during the season, I do not know; nor do I believe it has ever been ascertained, for the philosopher has not been much "abroad" along that coast. I do not recollect whether Humboldt made any estimate of the quantity that falls, or not. If any one has, he is the man, probably. I suppose it to be not much more than a foot for the whole season. This drizzle, though it assists vegetation somewhat, is not relied upon by the cultivators of the soil in that region, whose dependence is upon artificial irrigation—the water being brought from the small rivers that have their origin in the Andes. The plain about Lima, for instance, is supplied with water drawn from the Rimac, which flows through the city. During this moist season, which at Lima is called *winter*, (the mercury in Fahrenheit varying from 56 to 62 degrees, generally,) the naked, stony, desolate, uncultivated hills about the city, from six or seven hundred to two thousand feet high, become somewhat verdant, and with the verdure are mingled various flowers. But I return to the *guano*.

The quantity of *guano* within the jurisdiction of Peru has been estimated at from 40 to 50 millions of tons. The last, I have no doubt, is too high, and the first may be pretty near the truth. The article being found in many places, and in deposits of very irregular forms, it is impossible to get at the quantity, even approximately. The visible contours might be managed; but, then, the form of the floor upon which the mass reposes cannot be known without being uncovered. There are considerable quantities, also, of *guano* on the coasts of Bolivia and Chile; and I have thought that, including all of it between the 6th and 31st degrees of south latitude, there may be not less than fifty millions of tons. Taking other calculations for my data, I am placing the quantity lower, perhaps, than any person in Peru would place it. And if it is true, as has been asserted, that large subterranean deposits have been discovered, the quantity actually in existence may be vastly greater than I have supposed. But I have doubts about these deposits, except near the seashore, where some may have been buried in consequence of the drifting of the sand, continued, probably, for many centu-

ries. But it has been said, that there exist other deposits in the interior of the country, and at a considerable distance from the seashore, which are found by excavating the earth, as other hidden treasures are. But this is an illusion, or delusion, or both. Some persons about Lima, took it into their heads, whilst I was there, to maintain that *guano* was a mineral substance, and not an animal product. Their proof of this was the vast quantity—more, they said, than all the birds in the world could have produced from the days of Adam—and the inland subterranean deposits, the existence of which they either assumed, or admitted upon very questionable authority. But this only proved that those savans knew but little about *guano*—or its history, or the history of the country, or its agriculture. And had the inland mines of the article really existed, it would have proved nothing more than that their locality must once have been near the sea.

*Guano* was much more used, and much more appreciated, I have no doubt, by the ancient Peruvians, in the time of the Incas, (four or five hundred years ago,) than it has ever been, either by the Spaniards, or by the present occupants of the country—the independent Spanish Americans. And agriculture, it is certain, was much more flourishing than it has ever been since the conquest. Fewer vegetable productions were cultivated, and none of the cerealia, I believe, except maize, (Indian corn,) yet at least double the present population was supported in more abundance, more comfort, and more happiness, than has since been known among the common people. There is not, on the face of the earth, a more wretched and down-trodden creature than the poor Indian in some parts of South America. He is a Christian nominally, and is theoretically and constitutionally a free man; but, spiritually considered, he is practically no more than a heathen, and his condition, under every social and political aspect, is vastly inferior to the slave in the United States. He is not as intelligent, nor as much respected, nor as well fed, nor as well clothed, nor as well cared for in any sense. He has no more political rights, or rights of any kind, and is, in truth, a much more degraded being. I say this, and I believe it; yet I am no advocate of slavery—I am neither its friend nor its apologist—but I have seen enough to convince me that, "bitter draught!" as it is, the slave, when well treated, as he is in this country, is by no means the lowest in the scale of human beings. In South America, the poor and unprotected classes (about three-fourths of the whole mass) are subjected to an oppression more galling and intolerable than all the wrongs and injustice of our system of slavery together—which is, military impressment; not conscription, for that operates equally—but there every indigent, friendless man is liable to be seized at any moment, and torn from a starving and helpless family, (to which he probably never returns,) to be dragged, fettered, and handcuffed, to the army, there to die of disease, to starve, or to be shot, as the case may be; and the servitude on our farms and plantations is a holyday, compared with the condition of a

South American common soldier when on a campaign. And this enormous wrong is not inflicted by virtue of any law, or system, or rule; but a brutal *alcalde*, (a sort of justice of the peace,) or a still greater brute, it may be, in epaulettes, (which he disgraces,) may kidnap, at discretion, the poor, and powerless, and unprotected. *Revenons a nos moutons!*—i. e. to the guano.

I recollect to have seen it stated, in some printed document in Peru, that the quantity of guano annually consumed there amounts to about three thousand tons—which is not the tenth part of what ought to be used; but the Spanish American could not well be called a manure using animal. He generally goes on cultivating his ground, as it had been cultivated for ages before he was born; not knowing whether its fertility may be increased or not, by any appliance of the kind, and caring nothing either. There are thousands of tons of manure within the walls that surround the city of Lima, which might be very advantageously used in the neighborhood, but it is very little in requisition. Guano, it would be naturally supposed, from its applicability to all sorts of crops, with a few exceptions, and from the facility with which it might be obtained, would be in great request in Peru. Yet it is not so; and could it be furnished at a reasonable price, the demand would not be less than a hundred times as great for it in England, as it is in the country where it is produced. Agriculture is yet in its infancy as a science in South America. But very few, if any, wealthy and enlightened persons have dedicated themselves to its improvement; and where any attempt of the kind has been made, the results have not been, in general, very encouraging. In all South America there is not, I believe, a single periodical, or a single newspaper, devoted to agriculture; and it is as rare an occurrence to see a work upon agriculture, as it is to see a Bible, which is scarcely ever seen, unless in the possession of a priest. Rambling about some years ago in the Andes, I spent a day with a proprietor, who was somewhat a farmer, and somewhat a grazier; and in his possession I found, to my very great surprise, a Spanish translation of a part of Columella's work upon rural economy, entitled "*De Re Rustica*," written about eighteen hundred years ago. This was his oracle about all matters pertaining to his rural occupations; and he studied it, not doubting for a moment that it was a recent and standard publication. And finding him *felix in suo errore*, (happy under his mistake,) I thought it would be cruel to disabuse him, and I did not. Columella is a favorite, I think, with Spanish agriculturists—for the not unnatural reason, perhaps, that he was a Spaniard himself. His work possesses great merit, however, and is a very remarkable one, considering the state of agriculture at the time it was written.

In Peru, guano, though it is used very sparingly, is applied, notwithstanding, to almost every kind of vegetable production, except the sugar-cane; and it would be to that, if it was thought to need manure. It is used chiefly in the cultivation of maize (Indian corn) and potatoes, (Irish,) and is supposed to increase the

crop from one-fourth to one-third. It has been frequently asserted, and I have seen it stated in Chamber's Edinburgh Journal, that it increases the product thirty and forty fold. This is a great mistake, and is nothing more nor less than a gratuitous assumption, warranted neither by actual experiment, nor by any rational hypothesis. I append hereto an extract of a letter to me from WILLIAM F. TAYLOR, Esq., formerly United States consul at Arequipa, about the use of guano. It is used more than anywhere else in Peru, at that place, six or seven hundred miles to the southward of Lima, where agriculture is in a more respectable and efficient condition, perhaps, than anywhere else in that country. Mr. TAYLOR is right, I suppose, in saying that guano is "never" used (at Arequipa) "for wheat and other crops." But still it has been used for them elsewhere, and is considered to be suitable. This I say upon the authority of Dr. RIVERA, a man of science at Lima, who has written some articles upon the subject. He says, that in the province of Tarapaca it is used for wheat, and for all kinds of fruit-trees, though not for sugar-cane; but at Arequipa, Indian corn and potatoes only require it.

It was formerly, and may be yet, the custom in some parts of Peru, to apply the guano to the soil, and then let it lie fallow a whole year; which seems to be the worst kind of husbandry, thus improvidently to permit the precious material for so long a time to

"Waste its sweetness on the desert air."

Bad tillage, because, when committed to the ground, it is completely decomposed, and ready at once to impart its fertilizing properties to the crop, (whatever it may be,) a great portion of which, by exposure to the sun and atmosphere for so long a time, must be lost. But this opinion I advance diffidently, and under correction; for, to say the truth, I am myself rather a sorry agriculturist, though I have had opportunities of being a tolerably good one. I would take rank, probably, in the same category with the famous Triptolemus Yellowly, who figures in Sir WALTER SCOTT's novel of the "*Pirate*," though not quite so persevering an improver. Though I express myself rather depreciatingly of Peruvian agriculture in general, yet, in justice, it must be admitted that some productions are cultivated here and there, in a few places, with considerable success—particularly the tropical fruits, the sugar-cane, and the vine. Grapes are very abundant in some districts, and of a fine quality. Pretty fair and palatable wines are made of them, too, which might pass very well with any one that was not a connoisseur. They have a good body, are pure and well flavored, and though they might fail to tickle the palate of a *bon vivant*, would go down very well with a hearty and unsophisticated feeder. About the port of Pisco, 170 or 180 miles from Lima, there is an extensive vine district, and in it some wealthy and intelligent proprietors, and among them Don Domingo Elias, *supreme chief* at Lima about a year ago—whose supremacy, however, like that of many of his predecessors, was rather ephemeral; he, being but a cultivator, had to

succumb with his pruning-hook to another that wielded the sword.

There has been considerable speculation with respect to the rate with which guano accumulates. Humboldt was of opinion (forty years ago) that the deposits increased in bulk very slowly—not more than a few lines (12 to the inch) annually; thus assigning to the great deposits a very high antiquity, for some of them are said to be more than a hundred feet in depth—about the depth, I suppose, of the snow on the summit of Chimborazo, judging with the eye at the distance of seven or eight thousand feet below. I have not Humboldt at hand to refer to; but, from the data given by him, (which are, however, rather assumptions than verified facts,) the guano may have been accumulating for the last two or three thousand years. Dr. RIVERO (the same that I have quoted above) does not hesitate, however, to assign to some of the guano deposits a much higher antiquity, which “ought to be calculated,” he says, “from epochs anterior to the deluge.” This may seem to be extravagant; but I perceive nothing in the supposition that is absolutely absurd.

A British subject (Dr. HAMILTON) made various calculations to determine the rate at which the guano accumulates; and he fixed upon the quantity of fifteen tons per diem for the coast of Peru, assuming the number of birds to be one million; that each bird would deposit daily one ounce, one half of which would be lost by evaporation, leaving for the total result about the amount given—15 tons. This calculation must be, however, very erroneous; for the number of birds is greatly underrated, whilst the quantity of guano that each produces daily is, I have no doubt, overrated. Instead of one million, there must be many millions. Dr. RIVERO says that the great quantity of guano “will cease to attract admiration when the millions of birds that produce it are considered.” Don ANTONIO ULLOA, who travelled in Peru about one hundred years ago, says, in his *Voyage*, that he saw at the port of Arica, seven or eight hundred miles south of Lima, a flight of birds that was an hour and a half passing on the wing; and that, during that time, he saw no sky anywhere. Don ANTONIO was an accurate observer, scientific and intelligent, and, as we must suppose that he saw what he relates, there must have been in that one flock a good many millions—and that he saw at one spot, on a coast sixteen or seventeen hundred miles in extent, where guano is to be found. I, too, have seen the bay of Callao covered with birds sometimes for several square miles in extent—the number not being under a million, I think, certainly. Had Dr. HAMILTON assumed the number to be ten millions, I should still suppose him to be short of the reality.

A very natural question may be asked, Why are those marine birds (of various sizes, colors, species, and variety) so much more numerous on the coast of Peru than elsewhere? The reason is, that they find a climate adapted to their nature, and suitable food in great abundance. The food is fish, the number of which is still more surprising than the number of the birds that prey upon it. The fish abound,

as they do, because they too find a plenty of food adapted to them. If asked, though, why that food is so abundant, I should have to confess that the question would be rather too deep for my philosophy. Along that coast the variety of fish is very great, of all sizes and of every flavor; and every epicure and every glutton can have his palate gratified, be he man, bird, or beast.

There have been many analysis of guano, by FOURCROY & VAUQUELIN, BRETT, URE, LIÈRE, and others—the first analysis being made by F. and V. about forty years ago, the guano having been sent to them by HUMBOLDT. In no two cases have the results been exactly alike; but the discrepancies imply neither carelessness nor ignorance on the part of the chemists. The samples may not have been of the same quality. Some might have been more completely decomposed than the others, or have contained more extraneous matter—saline, silicious, earthy, aqueous, &c. Or they may have been of different kinds; for in Peru three are known, differing all from each other, more or less, in their constituent parts. These three kinds are the reddish, (rojo,) the gray, (parduzco,) and the white, (blanco,) of which the latter is considered to be the strongest, being the most recent; and it, as well as the gray, becomes red by age. All the difference between the three kinds is the result of time, and the accidental introduction of the foreign matter already mentioned.

Dr. URE's analysis seems to be considered in Peru to be the most exact, and is the one most relied on; but I am not aware of any good reason for this preference. Dr. U. is certainly a profound chemist; but so are, or were, the other analysers. According to him, the red guano contains 50 parts of one hundred of organic azotised matter, including urate of ammonia, giving from 8 to 17 parts of ammonia, water 11 parts, phosphate of lime 25 parts, phosphate of magnesia and ammonia, and of oxalate of ammonia 13 parts, silicious matter 1=100. I take this from a Spanish document, in which URE's analysis has been mutilated; it is minute enough, though, to show at once that guano, as a manure, must possess very great fertilizing qualities—a decisive proof of which is, that British agriculturists can afford to pay a higher price for it than for any other known manure which is attainable in large quantities. It has been found, by experiment, that the genuine Peruvian or Bolivian guano furnishes out of 100 parts, 88 parts promotive of vegetation; the Ichaboe, 77; Possession Island, 61; Porto Cabello, 37; the latter being of a very inferior quality. But still this does not show the relative value in commerce, and to the agriculturist, of these various species of guano; for in England the Peruvian is now selling for about eight pounds sterling the ton, whilst the Ichaboe commands not much more than five pounds. It seems to show, in fact, nothing more than the amount of extraneous matter contained in each, leaving still a great difference in the quality, when every substance is removed that is not guano.

Guano was not exported from Peru, I believe, as an article of commerce, until within the last ten years. The quantity exported, so

far, has not yet reached a hundred thousand tons, I think. About five years ago, the government at Lima made a contract with some individuals, stipulating that they should export within five years one hundred and twenty thousand tons, the government (to which all the guano belongs) receiving about twenty dollars per ton for all exported. But, in consequence of the decline of the article in the English market, this has been a losing speculation for the contractors so far, and not one-half of the hundred and twenty thousand tons has been yet exported. Some guano, when first taken to England, sold as high as 140 dollars a ton; some at 90 dollars; and it got down finally as low as to 35 dollars; and it could not be sold for much less than that, supposing it to cost nothing in Peru. This is a matter about which the English farmers appear to have been very capricious. At one time they would give for it an enormous price—more than it could possibly be worth; and at another, they would not give near its indisputable value; for, in England, I have no doubt that the farmer can afford to pay 50 dollars per ton for it, and be amply remunerated at the same time. In the United States it is doubtful whether this price can be given for the general purposes of agriculture. For horticultural purposes, it may be, I imagine, near our large towns.

It seems to be admitted in Peru, (and if so it is to be deplored,) that the sea-fowl that produce the guano are sensibly diminishing in numbers. This is there imputed to three causes: the excessive heat of the summers of late years, the scarcity of food, and the great increase in the number of vessels that frequent the ports, to the noise made by their crews, and to the firing of cannon. The two first I consider as of no cogency, and as ideal. The summers, if they have been a little warmer than usual, (which is doubtful,) would not drive away the birds; or, if it drove away any, it would drive nearly all; for, among the inferior animals, (inferior to man) instinct is uniform and unvacillating. If it influences any, it influences nearly all. With the reasoning biped, man, it is otherwise. In his migrations he may be influenced by a hundred motives that may influence many, or but a small portion. It is not so, though, with the feathered biped. Nor can I subscribe to the alleged scarcity of food. Nobody has observed a diminution in the number of fish—the whale excepted, upon which the birds do not prey; nor has there been any, in my opinion. They are as abundant, I suppose, as they have been for some thousands of years past, and as they will be, probably, for some thousands to come. The noise made by the cannon, &c., may have produced some effect upon the more sensitive and timid of the birds, perhaps, but, judging from the fearless and familiar manner in which they come into the bay of Callao, where there is much noise and firing, I should conclude that they are not so very easily frightened.

The guano which is exported from Peru is taken at present from a small island near the shore, called Chincha, 160 or 170 miles south of Lima. Upon this island is the great deposit, which astonishes all who see it; and which was estimated by a Peruvian Minister of For-

eign Affairs, a few years ago, a conscientious and intelligent man, (Don JOSE VILLA,) to contain fifty millions of tons alone. Though I have assumed that to be the whole quantity to be found in the country, I do this because I am an enemy of all hyperbole and exaggeration, and because I know that it is a very common thing to exaggerate a little on such occasions. Fifty millions of tons is a very large quantity; if it is there, so much the better for somebody. I hope that Mr. VILLA was right. Fifty millions of tons, at twenty dollars a ton, which it is worth at the island, is a thousand millions of dollars—enough to pay one-fourth of that financial monstrosity, the British national debt. Or, supposing each ton of guano to represent, in grain, two tons of wheat—which it does, at least, I think—we have 100,000,000 tons of wheat, or 2,600,000,000 bushels—equal in value, perhaps, to all the gold and silver that have been found on this continent since its discovery by Columbus. And to carry away the guano from Chincha at once, would require seven or eight times as much shipping as there is in the world.

This is an interesting calculation, and one that may not only be true, as far as it goes, but short even of the whole truth. On a barren nook of only a square mile or two—not worth, of itself, a single dollar—there exists, at this moment, tangible, positive, indisputable wealth of greater value than all the gold and silver mines of Peru, rich as some of them are. And what is remarkable is, that, until within a very few years, this vast amount of wealth was not only not appreciated, but out of Peru was scarcely known to exist. And what is more remarkable still is, that the country which owns this great treasure is, fiscally and agriculturally considered, a poor country, though rich in resources. So much for bad government!

Dr. FEUCHTWANGER, of New York, has suggested that an artificial guano might be made to rival the Peruvian. I doubt this myself. All the ingredients might be put together, to be sure, and the result would be, I have no doubt, a very valuable compost; but it would not be guano. It would lack some thousands of years of age; and, even with that, it would be but a counterfeit still. Nature does not permit herself to be rivalled by Art in any of her operations. The chemist can compose and decompose, analyse and destroy; but he cannot create. All the ingenuity of man, with all the appliances of science, cannot make a blade of grass, or a diamond of the lowest water, although many tons of charcoal have been burnt in the attempt to make it. And I consider it equally impossible to make by art a single ounce of genuine Peruvian guano.

In the guano deposits, and far below the surface, ancient tools and instruments are frequently found, and sometimes birds' eggs—some of them externally pretty perfect, but probably altogether changed from their original nature in the interior; for those of which the shells have been abraded, present the appearance of an inorganic, indurated mass; the vital principle having been extinct for many ages, I presume.

It would be a curious and interesting experiment, were it practicable, (in my opinion, it is

not,) to hatch some of those eggs, which may be four or five thousand years old, to see what kind of birds would be produced—whether identical with the species that produce the guano at present, whether any change had taken place in the external appearance or internal organization, or whether a new race had succeeded to what Dr. RIVERO might call the antediluvian, and which may now be extinct.

It is very certain that great changes have taken, and will yet take place, in all the departments of nature, but not to the extent, I imagine, that some ingenious though visionary investigators have assumed: Lord MONBODDO, for instance, who advanced the opinion, that man was originally an ape or a monkey, and had, through lapse of time, lost his tail, and gained the faculty we call *reason*—thus leaving the matter in doubt, whether, upon the whole, he has been a gainer or loser. And Bory St. VINCENT seemed to think that the monkey was rather the more perfect animal of the two, physically considered—having the advantage of possessing four hands, which answer the purpose also of four feet. But enough of this philosophy.

Besides its admirable agricultural and fructifying qualities, guano possesses a virtue (as is supposed) that cannot be made too public. It is believed in Peru, to be a specific against that foul and loathsome disease, leprosy. Whether it is or not, I cannot determine; but I will state facts, and then every one can judge for himself. Three or four years ago, two lepers, whose cases were considered incurable and desperate, were sent from the main land to the island of Chincha, to live or die as Providence might will it. They were deported, and in fact marooned. There they remained two years, living amidst the guano, sleeping on it, and working in it a little; and, at the end of that time, they were perfectly cured. Of this fact, there can be no doubt, I think. The proof is official and documentary. The medical faculty in Lima, imputed the cure to the ammonia contained in the guano—and with reason, perhaps. But it does not follow, though, that ammonia will *per se* cure leprosy. It may be requisite that it should be in combination with other substances; or it may be that the curative principle really exists in some other component part of the guano, not now regarded, it may be, as possessing any therapeutic virtue. But I will leave the matter to the physicians, saying no more lest I get beyond my depth. I will merely add, that the food of the lepers, and the pure sea air they breathed, might have had some effect. Their food was simple and scanty, the flesh of wild ducks mostly.

Having stumbled, incidentally, upon the leprosy, I am going to say a few more words about it, though what I shall say has nothing to do with guano. My object is to correct a fallacy that has gone abroad, and which includes a libel upon that most useful and most valuable, though not very graceful or attractive quadruped, the hog. I recollect to have seen it stated, in some letters written from Texas, that it is universally admitted, throughout Spanish America, that the eating of pork causes leprosy. This

I consider to be altogether a mistake. It is a mistake to suppose that eating pork produces the leprosy; and a mistake to assume that it is admitted, throughout Spanish America, to produce it. I have travelled considerably through that country, and have not seen pork any where repudiated among the natives, though it may be in some places. But, on the contrary, it is in several parts the favorite butcher's meat of the laboring classes—as at Lima, where it is consumed in great quantities, and where, although there are cases of leprosy, yet that disease does not predominate in any remarkable degree. If pork generated it, not less than three-fourths of the people would be afflicted with it, instead of one out of three or four thousand.

I am of opinion, that if pork is at all connected with leprosy, it is the want, and not the use of it, that causes it. My own theory is, right or wrong, that the causes of leprosy, where there is no hereditary taint, are bad air, filthy habits, scarcity of nutritious food, (not pork enough,) and laziness. I must explain what I mean by bad air; for I have seen cases of the leprosy in the Andes, some thousands of feet above the sea level, where the atmosphere was pure and transparent to a degree of which, we who dwell but a few feet above tide-water, can scarcely form an idea. The bad air is in the wretched, smoky, suffocating, stinking, windowless hovels, the usual abodes of the laboring classes in South America.

Wherever a prejudice prevails against pork in Spanish America, it has been brought from Spain three hundred years ago; and the Spaniards had it from the Jews or Moors—from the latter, probably. The Jew regarded the hog, as an unclean animal, because he was commanded so to do; the Mahometan, because he had a tradition, that he believed, which assigned to that animal an impure and revolting origin. It was, that he was spontaneously engendered in NOAH'S ark, from the excrement of the elephant. He was considered, therefore, to be too filthy to be eaten. And, singular as it may appear, it may possibly be true, that a Christian repugnance to pork, where it exists, may have its origin in this whimsical and puerile Mahometan legend. I take this story from MONTESQUIEU'S *Lettres Persanes*; and having given my authority, I am not responsible for it in any manner.

Peruvian guano is selling at present in the United States, I believe, at three dollars per hundred pounds. This is, in my opinion, a higher price than the farmers will be able to give habitually, until the price of grain gets up again—such, I mean, as apply it to grain crops. Other kinds of guano will be imported, probably, and sold much lower; but it ought to be borne in mind, that, though nominally cheaper, it may in fact be dearer; for none has yet been discovered, that is to be compared with the Peruvian in point of fertilizing capability. Another suggestion I will make is, that those who purchase an inferior kind of guano to experiment with, and the experiments do not result satisfactorily, ought not, for that reason, to condemn all guano, but only the particular kind they have used. With our present limited knowledge of that manure, and

of its various kinds and qualities, it does not seem to be safe for the agriculturist to experiment with any other kind than the genuine, unadulterated Peruvian article.

A very important question is, to what kind of crops is guano best adapted? And it is one that I confess myself not at all qualified to answer. I have made no experiments, and do not suppose I shall make any. I incline, though, strongly to the opinion, that guano is adapted, if any manure is, to every kind of soil, and to every kind of crop. But, since the researches of Sir HUMPHREY DAVY and of LIEBIG—in consequence of the discoveries they have made in chemistry as applied to agriculture—it may be doubted whether there exists any such manure; but there must be a mutual adaptation—the soil suiting the manure, and this suiting the soil. But as this is a matter that I am not competent to discuss; and as it has no necessary connexion with the objects of this letter, I leave it to abler heads and to abler pens. And I here conclude this long, and, I fear, dull and uninteresting epistle; assuring you that I am here, as I was in Peru, ever, and

With the most perfect respect,

Your very obedient servant,

J. C. PICKETT.

FRANCIS MARKOE, JR., Esq.,  
Cor. Secretary of National Institute.

*Extract of a letter from Wm. F. Taylor, late  
United States Consul at Arequipa.*

\* \* \* "APRIL, 19th, 1845.

"The yellowish-red *huano* is the class exported. There is, also, a white species—actual birds' excrement. It is applied almost exclusively to crops of Indian corn, though sometimes used for potatoes—for wheat, or other crops, I believe never. This may be owing to corn and potatoes being sown in hillocks or furrows; for it would be difficult to apply it to wheat the way it is used here, and would be expensive. I know of no other reason for

not using it. It is applied but once to a crop—viz: Indian corn is sown as with us—that is, in hillocks about 12 inches apart; and when they 'amontonar,' (hill up,) which is done but once to each plant after getting to be about 24 to 26 inches high, the weeds being removed, women take a handful of guano, (women's hands are rather small here,) and place at the foot of the plant (there are generally 3, 4, and 5 plants in each hillock) as much *huano* as may be held between the three fingers—so that a handful serves for three or four plants. At the time of applying, they scrape a little earth over it, lightly with the toes. Then follow the hillocking, and, as soon as done, the plants are irrigated at once. All cultivation is done here by irrigation, and not by rains, as it only rains a little here in January and February. Maize is sown at the end of August and September, and is gathered at the last of April and the beginning of May; so that in the seasons of rain here, the corn is well grown—say, 7 or 9 feet high. In December and January, we have roasting ears. Each stalk has two or three, and sometimes more ears, nearly as large as ours. The grain is much larger, though flatter, not round, and I think not so sweet; rather of the yellow kind, though there are different species.

To each *topo* of land, (a measure of five thousand square *varas* of 33 inches each,) they use from 3 to 4 *fanegas* of *huano*—each *fanega* being 200 pounds Spanish, or 206 pounds English. To potatoes, it is applied just in the same manner—once only, and when the plant bears the first flowers.

I cannot state exactly the effect of guano, more than that, they say it is heating—fortifies the plant, ripens it more promptly, and produces a larger crop—(more ears of corn and a fuller grain.) It is supposed that land *huaneada* (dressed with *huano*) should produce from one-fourth to one-third more than land on, which it is not used.

\* \* \*  
W. F. TAYLOR.

# HON. WADDY THOMPSON, POCAHONTAS, CORTEZ, AND SANTA ANNA.

The following letter, addressed to the Hon. WADDY THOMPSON, was published in the *Washington Union*, in the month of September last, and is now printed in pamphlet form as it then appeared, a few alterations only having been made, none of them very material, or affecting the sense in any manner.

In venturing these remarks upon the "Recollections of Mexico," I have not been in any manner influenced by a desire to play the critic, for to critical acumen I make no pretensions. I read the *Recollections*, part of them with pleasure and with profit, and part of them with regret, I must confess; the latter portions being those that I have commented on in the letter. It was not through the excessive and elaborate laudation of CORTEZ and SANTA ANNA, as it seemed to me to be, that determined me to dip pen in ink. I thought that General THOMPSON had misconceived entirely the characters of these two remarkable personages. But that I cared not much for. The first be called a hero, his "favorite hero;" the second a "patriot," though, by his own admission, a speculating and cock-fighting one. But the author of the "Recollections" was not alone in his admiration of CORTEZ; for others, who have devoted more time, perhaps, as the study of his character, and to the actions that have secured him immortality, or "damned him to everlasting fame"—an issue yet to be tried—than he had, had come to the same conclusion nearly respecting him; leaving out his being a "sincere and devout Christian," however, which I do not think any other author except the Spanish writers have called him; and of true religion, I consider them to be in his case, as Mrs. PEACHUM said about another matter, "bitter bad judges." Of this any body that will read their histories of the conquest of Mexico will be convinced—excepting, always, the virtuous and excellent LAS CASAS. I leave CORTEZ, therefore, to General THOMPSON, and to other able and eloquent writers who have offered themselves to the world as the heralds of his actions and guardians of his fame. For myself, were I called upon to sum up his merit and demerit in twenty-five words, neither more nor less I should not attempt any thing original, but would borrow four lines from SOUTHEY, which he wrote for NAPOLEON, but which fit the conqueror of Mexico rather better. Here they are:

"Bold man and bad,  
Remorseless, godless, full of fraud and lies,  
And black with murders and with perjuries,  
Himself in Hell's whole panoply he clad."

Of SANTA ANNA, I have not much more to say than I have said in my letter. He is now at the head of the Government of Mexico, as General THOMPSON wished him to be. I say at the head, because it is well known that he is the government, although another may be the nominal chief. His being there, does not affect my opinion of him any way. Bad as he is, he may be no worse than some of his predecessors have been, or than some of his successors will be. But I shall not forget readily, that the blood of four hundred of my fellow-countrymen, by him wantonly, ruthlessly and remorselessly slaughtered, has yet to be avenged; and I have an abiding belief and conviction, that in Heaven's own good time it will be.

Raro antecedentem scelestum,  
Deseruit pede Pœna claudo.\*

His chief excuse, or his defence rather, for the murder of FANNING's detachment was, that a law of the Mexican Congress made it his duty to put them to death. Now, when before or since did he ever obey a law, unless it suited him to do so? For him, whose whole career has been one of violence and blood, and a violation of all laws, to cant about obeying laws, is rather too bad. Why did he not imitate the officers and soldiers of France, who, when commanded by the National Convention to give no quarter to the invaders of their country, refused to obey, saying that they were soldiers and not assassins? Had there been any thing noble and generous in his nature he would have done so; but there was nothing of that in him, and he was happy, doubtless, to have it in his power to shed blood, when he could do it without danger to himself.

Dismissing this *par nobile fratrum*, CORTEZ and SANTA ANNA, I have next to say, that my chief inducement to notice certain passages in the "Recollections" was, the injustice, as it seems to me to be, that the writer, through inadvertence, as I must believe, has done to the character and memory of POCAHONTAS, in the passage in which, in the enthusiasm of his admiration for MARINA, the *chère amie* and interpreter of CORTEZ, he institutes a comparison between them very much to the advantage of the latter, saying that POCAHONTAS is thrown into the shade by her. From this judgment I appeal, first, to the "sober second thoughts" of the author himself; next, to the people of Virginia; then to our countrymen

\* Vengeance, though slow and lame of foot,  
suffers not the villain to escape.

and countrywomen generally; and, finally, to the admirers of virtue, humanity and nobleness of soul, wherever they are to be found; for all such must admire the daughter of POWHATAN. Had General THOMPSON pronounced *her* to be "a miracle of a woman," instead of MARINA, he would then have been right, and nothing more than just. His "miracle" had, I willingly admit, no little merit of a certain kind. She was shrewd, talented and courageous, and it appears that she was not without good qualities; but in the company in which she found herself, there was certainly not much room for the display or for the development of them. But I am not aware that she possessed a single attribute worth possessing, or a single good quality, that POCAHONTAS did not possess in an equal degree at least, and the latter possessed what the other did not; that which, according to SHAKESPEARE, in man or woman, is the immediate jewel of their souls—a "good name."

In all history and in all romance it would be difficult to find a more perfect character than POCAHONTAS; and taking her as she has come down to us, it appears to me to be impossible to say wherein it could have been improved. And she was doubtless what she has been represented to be. This I conceive to be one of the most incontestable facts in history. The proof is, the account given of her by Captain Smith, a man incapable of falsehood, and not addicted to exaggeration, who wrote that he himself had witnessed and experienced, and whose accounts had the sanction and belief of contemporary thousands, hundreds of them being eye-witnesses of what he narrated and described.

I imagine myself, rather vainly, perhaps, a tolerably competent judge of the relative merits of these two remarkable women. I think so, because I have read, in the course of my life, the best Spanish histories of the conquest of Mexico in the original language. I have read also much about POCAHONTAS, and it is impossible to become acquainted with her story without loving and admiring a being so good, so gentle, so humane, and so heroic; who, when but a child of the age of twelve or thirteen gave proofs of goodness and of greatness of soul not often evinced by either sex at mature years. She saved the life of Captain Smith, freely and fearlessly putting her own in jeopardy to do it. She saved the English colonists from destruction, relieved their wants, and was always the willing and triumphant mediatrix between them and her father, who, though suspicious, and fierce, and crafty, and violent, was yet a noble-minded savage. And when transplanted from her native forests to the English court, where she was recognized as a princess, and treated with the respect due to one, the admirable propriety with which she sustained her new character is not the least striking part of her history, and it proves abundantly that she must have been a woman of great natural talent, as well as of great and noble qualities. And this glorious creature died at the age of twenty-two! She left one child, a son, by her husband, Mr. ROXFORD; and through that son her blood, which I should

value more than "all the blood of all the HOWARDS," yet flows in the veins of many persons of high standing in Virginia.

The extracts from various authors, which form an appendix to my letter to General THOMPSON, and to which large additions might easily be made, are not brought forward for the purpose of proving what POCAHONTAS was, or what she did. All that is now uncontested and incontestable matter of history. My object has been to place before the public some portion of what grave, and learned, and eloquent historians, writing in various languages, who have treated of the early settlement of Virginia, have said respecting her. She was a favorite with all, and all have taken pleasure in paying a tribute to her good and excellent qualities; and not one of them, can I be persuaded, would have thought for a moment of admitting that she "was thrown into the shade" by General THOMPSON's "miracle of a woman," MARINA.

Being by birth a Virginian, with strong attachments for my native State, as well as for the one from which I hail, (Kentucky) and the memory of POCAHONTAS being dear to every son and daughter of the "Old Dominion," I trust that, in vindicating her memory, I am doing nothing culpable, presumptuous, or officious; and I presume to think, that the author of the "Recollections" ought, in the next edition of his work, to show clearly how the Mexican heroine was superior to "our own," if he can; and if he cannot, then he ought frankly to admit that it was through misconception or inadvertence that he yielded the palm of superiority to the former; and he possesses, I have no doubt, magnanimity enough to do this.

WASHINGTON CITY, December 1846.

## LETTER

To the Hon. WADSWORTH THOMPSON,

*Late Envoy Extraordinary and  
Minister Plenipotentiary to Mexico.*

SIR: I have read recently your "*Recollections of Mexico*," and whilst I say (and I say it with pleasure) that I found much in your book that is both amusing and instructive; candor obliges me to say, also, that there are some things I regret—things which have not my concurrence, which I do not approve, and of which I am obliged to think you have taken decidedly erroneous views. Judging from what I know of your character, I am persuaded that you will not be displeased should I make a few remarks upon some passages in the "*Recollections*" in a spirit of frank and liberal criticism; not for the sake of finding fault, but for the purpose of neutralizing in some degree, the effect that your opinions and assumptions (such as I think wrong) are likely to have upon your numerous readers. Consulting at once both brevity and perspicuity, I will bring together some quotations from your work relative to the topics on which I propose making, *currente calamo*, a few observations.



Of HERNAN or FERNANDO CORTEZ, the conqueror of Mexico, you say that he was "a miracle of a man"—"slaughter of the Cholulans a stain on his character," however—"glorious and wonderful character of CORTEZ."—Chap. IV.

BERNAL DIAZ, "a veracious old chronicler"—"the most enchanting book I ever read (DIAZ) in any language, in which the beauties of OSSIAN and FROISSART are combined"—"most reliable authority upon the conquest of Mexico. Mr. PRESCOTT has fallen into some errors as to the old chronicler, and, I think, underrates his work."

"I know of no hero, ancient or modern, for whom I have more admiration than for CORTEZ"—"vindicate my favorite hero, CORTEZ, against the imputation of unnecessary cruelty."

Of the murder, or slaughter, or slaying, or killing, whichever it was, of GUATEMOSIN, the Mexican emperor, you say; "CORTEZ had satisfactory evidence that, on the march GUATEMOSIN had formed a plan that was ripe for execution, for the Mexicans to rise and massacre the Spaniards. It is absurd to impute to CORTEZ any other motives for the fact." "CORTEZ was at all points a hero himself, and could have no other feeling on this occasion than that of sympathy and admiration for GUATEMOSIN, the greatest of Indian heroes—a being of romance, rather than of history."—Appendix.

"CORTEZ was a Christian, a most sincere and devout one, and in this particular he stands at an immeasurable height above all other conquerors, &c., &c.—that "miracle of a woman, Doña MARINA, the Indian interpreter of CORTEZ, whose great qualities throw into the shade our own POCAHONTAS."—Chap. IV and Appendix.

Of President SANTA ANNA you say, "his great vice is avarice." "If I may believe half of what I heard, he is not free from speculation and bribery." "I should be glad to see him at the head of government." "SANTA ANNA has a finely formed head and face, there is scarcely a feature or a point in either that SPURZHEIM or LAVATER would desire to change"—"indicative of talent, firmness, and benevolence." "So said a distinguished American statesman."—Chap. VII.

"I believe SANTA ANNA is a patriot." "He (SANTA ANNA) said that Gen. JACKSON expressed himself satisfied with his explanations of the massacre at the Alamo, and of FANNING's command. "The massacre of FANNING's men was not without illustrious examples"—an "unmitigated murder," however.

These are the passages upon which I propose to make a few remarks. I will begin with the "veracious old chronicler," BERNAL DIAZ; and respecting him I agree with you, except that I do not at all partake of the enthusiasm of your admiration for him. I think his book a very entertaining one, but I do not consider it by any means the "most enchanting," in any language; and, when you said this, it was not in your mind, probably, that you had read ROBINSON CRUSOE, DON QUIXOTE, GIL BLAS, RABELAIS, and others that might be named—all at least as enchanting,

though not capable of exciting the same painful interest, for the reason that they are fictions, and the other a solemn and serious relation of facts—the bloodiest, the most atrocious, and most harrowing of any on record; or, at all events, as much so as any others.

I do not think, either, that between OSSIAN and DIAZ there are many points of resemblance; and I scarcely know any two books that treat so much of the same subject, (war,) that, in my judgment, are more unlike each other. And as for FROISSART, I cannot but believe, that whoever has waded through his voluminous work, must confess that he has found some rather heavy reading on the way; though, on the whole, it undoubtedly deserves the eulogiums that have been so profusely bestowed upon it.\* I think you have done no more than justice to DIAZ, when you give him the credit of being "veracious"—truth being the cream and essence and quintessence of history, as veracity is the glory of a historian; pity 'tis that some of them have been so indifferent to this glory! I am of opinion that there is, perhaps, no book purporting to be a narrative of facts, written under as disadvantageous circumstances as DIAZ wrote, that contains more truth. I believe that he saw and heard all that he says he did, or that, at all events, he religiously believed that he did. I think so, because the most competent judges, whatever fault they may find with his manner or style, or his vanity or illiteracy, all agree, I believe, that he is honest. And I have another reason, which is, that his history contains as much internal evidence of its truthfulness as any other book of the kind, probably, though now and then there are passages to be found, particularly where he plays the theologian and natural philosopher, that are rather ludicrous and absurd; as when he says of the Virgin Mary, *era virgin antes del parto, en el parto y despues del parto*. And of a horse that died of heat on the expedition to Guatamala, he says, that the cause of his death was, that the grease in his body was melted by the excessive heat—(*se le derriñó la manteca en el cuerpo con el gran calor*)—a death we were all in danger of dying here in the month of July last, when, as the Hon. C. J. INGER-SOLL says, (War of 1812,) of this same city of Washington in 1813, "the weather was in canicular sympathy with our condition."

You have done right, I think, to vindicate the old chronicler against Mr. PRESCOTT's disparaging critique, in which he does not charge him with falsehood, or with any thing disreputable or criminal; yet, taken altogether, the article is unfavorable, notwithstanding that there is some "faint praise" flung over and through it here and there. But CORTEZ was the favorite hero of Mr. PRESCOTT as well as of yourself, and I am inclined to believe that he does not consider the old chronicler's testimony as favorable to him as you do, and was easily led insensibly, by his partiality to the one, to underrate the other. And here I will remark, that Mr. PRESCOTT has done the work

\* Bayle, one of the ablest of critics, says of FROISSART, that he is diffuse and needlessly circumstantial—[et historien est fort diffus et chargé de circonstances peu nécessaires.]

of whitewashing the character of that remorseless cut-throat and robber, (CORTEZ,) in the most effectual manner, and with but too much success; for, with few exceptions, the thousands and tens of thousands who read his admirable and eloquent pages, will admit as gospel and historic truth all that he has said of that bloody and unscrupulous butcher and oppressor. And behold the omnipotence of genius! I, who believe nothing that Mr. PRESCOTT has said of CORTEZ, that represents him as noble, and generous, and humane, and merciful—I read his “Conquest of Mexico” with as much pleasure, I suppose, as those who believe it all; and, carried away with his fascinating style, scarcely think of regretting, until I get through the work, that so much talent, and learning, and time, have been expended upon one of the very worst characters in all history.

Mr. PRESCOTT is writing, it is understood, a history also of the conquest of Peru; and I am curious to know what sort of a character he will make of PIZARRO, who as much merits laudation as CORTEZ; though they both deserved, in truth, to be loaded with infamy in this world, and to be sent far beyond purgatory in the next. There can be but one opinion about the “Conquest of Mexico” as regards the execution of the work and the good faith of the author, but I am sorry that he did not dedicate his great powers to a subject worthier of them, as I should say; and that he did not leave to Spaniards the task of vindicating the detestable workers of iniquity of their own nation; and this, in the case of CORTEZ, had been already very plausibly and ably done by SOLIS CADALSO, MOJO, and others.

We agree that the “veracious old chronicler” is an unexceptionable witness, as respects the conquest of Mexico and the conduct of CORTEZ; and this premised, I do not hesitate to express the opinion, that at least four readers out of five, who will peruse his narrative carefully and deliberately, without prepossession or prejudice, will come to the conclusion that his hero, whilst brave, skilful, politic, and persevering, and even eloquent—for DIAZ says he could employ honeyed words (*palabras melosas*) when he chose to do so—was at the same time cruel, sanguinary, and rapacious. DIAZ does not say so in so many words, it is true; nor did he intend that inference to be drawn; for CORTEZ was his favorite hero as well as yours. But he was honest, truthful, plain to bluntness, with a good deal of *naïveté* about him, as Dr. ROBERTSON says, who expresses himself in his *History of America* very favorably of him; and he is, or was, as good a judge of his claims to credibility as Mr. PRESCOTT is; but not a better, certainly. DIAZ calls his own work a “plain and true history,” (*clara y verdadera historia*;) and such it is admitted almost universally to be.

The slaughter of the Cholulans, you say to yourself, is a stain on the character of CORTEZ; and undoubtedly it is; but I do not perceive that it tarnishes his character any more than any other of the countless slaughters that he commanded and superintended; as at Capistlan, for instance, where Mexican blood flowed

so profusely that it discolored the water of a stream that was near, rendering it unfit to be drunk. This I say, not upon the authority of DIAZ, but of the historian SOLIS, who relates the fact in his “Conquest of Mexico.” His words are, “rivulets of Mexican blood flowed for awhile so abundantly into the river, that the Spaniards, who repaired to it to drink, were obliged either to continue to suffer from thirst, or to reconcile themselves to the horrid refreshment.” (*Fue necesario aguardarse la sed ò se compusiese con el horror del refrigerio.*) And SOLIS was as great an admirer of CORTEZ as you are; for he was his favorite hero also, and he labors hard to make him heroic throughout his work, which is well written, his style being greatly superior to DIAZ’s, though not so entertaining; but I do not believe him to have been as veracious or as conscientious as the old chronicler. He was a furious and uncompromising bigot, who regarded the cutting of throats, and all atrocities, as meritorious acts, if done for the advancement of the holy Catholic faith. The words he uses in relating the death of Montezuma, prove that he had a heart of flint. “During the battle,” he says, “that lasted three days, he (Montezuma) rendered to the Devil eternal possession of his soul,” (*rendió al demonio la eterna posesion de su espíritu.*) He claims much for his hero, but is modest enough to place him, as regards power and merit, after the Almighty; for “the work,” (the conquest) he says, “was not entirely his, for as it was the will of God that that empire should be reduced, he availed himself of his talent, &c., (*sirviendose de su talento.*)

The slaughter at Cholula you condemn, though you acquit CORTEZ of “unnecessary cruelty,” which is a phrase not perfectly intelligible to me, though it may be to you, and to many others. I am not caustic enough to be able to distinguish between necessary and unnecessary cruelty, being rather of opinion that cruelty can never be necessary. Harsh, stern, and severe measures may be, but if dictated by inevitable and overpowering necessity, they can scarcely be called cruel, it appears to me. But what do you say to CORTEZ’s branding the prisoners he made (being first made slaves) with a hot iron, precisely as cattle are branded; thus superadding to the greatest wrong that can be inflicted, the greatest insult that can be offered to a human creature—burning into his flesh an ignominious and indelible token of his degradation and ruin? Was this cruelty, and was it necessary? And upon whose authority do I relate this? You know well enough, without doubt; but it will surprise some probably to learn, that it is the veracious old chronicler himself who vouches for such an unparalleled barbarity, or to be paralleled only perhaps by the atrocities perpetrated on board slave ships, and which have been so eloquently and indignantly denounced by BURKE, WILBERFORCE, FOX, BROUGHAM, and others.

These massacres and this branding are bad enough, but they are not all the stains that discolor and deform your favorite hero, and which I feel assured, and am happy so to feel, not all the eloquent historians and eloquent diploma-

tists who have come so chivalrously to the rescue, will be able, in the opinion of a just and impartial posterity, to remove. And the time will come, if mankind do not retrograde, that this *beau idéal* of a hero, as he is now represented to be, and who is placed upon the same eminence with great and good men, will finally find his level in history among the NEBOS and CALIGULAS of antiquity, and the VISCONTIS, and MULEY ISHMAELS, and PIZARROS of more modern times.

I will now call your attention to an act of necessary cruelty, as you seem to regard it, which casts a shade over the character of CORTEZ of yet deeper darkness than his slaughters and brandings—the murder—the execution, as you call it, of his prisoner GUATEMOSIN, the Mexican monarch, who you say had formed a plan for the massacre of the Spaniards. This plan you assume as undeniable, and pronounce it to be absurd to impute to CORTEZ any other motives for the act, he being a hero at all points! You argue at some length to prove this, but cite no authority. I will cite one, though, to establish the murder—one, unimpeachable in your eyes and in my own; pronounced by you to be most reliable authority; no less a man than the old chronicler himself, who, upon this point is most explicit, and betrays feelings that do him honor, such as certainly never influenced the actions or softened the heart of the hero. The truth of this dark transaction is plainly as follows: GUATEMOSIN had become an incumbrance to CORTEZ. No more treasures could be extorted or discovered by threats, imprisonment, ill treatment, or tortures. To set him at liberty might be dangerous; it would have been, no doubt. What, then, was to be done? To this question the same answer suggested itself, that has ever suggested itself to every unscrupulous tyrant who has been placed in the same circumstances—put him out of the way. But a pretext was necessary. That was soon found—a conspiracy of an inconsiderable number of naked, miserable, starving, unarmed, and exhausted Indian slaves, against the lives of the Spaniards, armed to the teeth; and one of whom, as previous combats had proven, was more than a match for two hundred, when free and armed, and in martial array, and fighting for their country, their homes, their liberties, their wives and children, and all that is dear to man, savage or civilized. Never, in my opinion, was the allegation of a conspiracy more utterly groundless and absurd, if I may borrow your own work. You must know—no man knows better—that this charge of conspiracy is an old device, and one long since discredited. Availing herself of this pretext, Queen ELIZABETH murdered Queen MARY, with some judicial forms, it is true, such as they were, because she could not prevail upon an honest man, Sir AMIAS PAWLET, to take her off privately. GUATEMOSIN was disposed of without any forms that deserved even the name; and to add to the “deep damnation of his taking off,” he was made to die a death of all others the most disgraceful, and which the Spaniards do not, I believe, inflict upon the worst malefactors—he was hung, and with him the CACIQUE of Tacuba, charged also with conspiracy—(some say two caciques were executed.)

DIAZ says on this occasion: “I much piled the great GUATEMOSIN,” [GUATEMOSIN.] “They” [G. and the Cacique of Tacuba] “were most unjustly put to death, and the act was condemned by all of us that were on that expedition.” [*Túbe gran lastima del gran Guatemuz y fué esta muerte que les dieron muy injustamente dada y parecia mal a todos los que íbamos aquella jornada.*] Not only did DIAZ condemn the murder, but it was condemned by all the soldiers; men to whom blood and slaughter were familiar, who regarded but little the life of an Indian, certainly; yet even these men, callous as they may be supposed to have been, were touched by the cruel fate of the fallen monarch, disapproved the putting of him to death, and pronounced it to be unjust. One only approved, and he ought to have been the last to approve. You say, though, that on that occasion CORTEZ, whilst imbruing his hands in the blood of his prisoner, could have “had for him no other feeling than that of sympathy and admiration.” I do not know what authority you have for this opinion or assertion, whichever it is; but if DIAZ is good authority, I do not think that there is any ground for believing that it was felt; and, if affected, it was just that kind of sympathy that ELIZABETH affected to feel for MARY after she had been executed, and which only proved that her persecutor and destroyer was a profound hypocrite, as well as an unfeeling tyrant.\*

Thus perished GUATEMOSIN, dying the death of a felon, by the command of him by whom he had been first robbed of country, kingdom, liberty, friends, happiness, and of every thing that force can flish from weakness; thus he perished, whom you pronounced to have been “the greatest of Indian heroes, a being of romance rather than history.” You have read his speech to CORTEZ, when about to be led to execution. It is a memorable one, well worth reading, and well worth remembering. “MALINCHE,” (CORTEZ,) he said, “I have long perceived, from your false words, that you had destined me for such a death, because I did not lay violent hands upon myself when you entered the city of Mexico. Why are you going thus to put me unjustly to death? God, one time, will ask this of you.” Yes! unless the Christian religion is only an imposture, future accountability a fallacy, and the justice of Heaven an illusion, this question will one day be asked beyond all doubt. When it is, you and I will be present; and, for myself, such is my bad taste, or my undevoutness, that I would far rather be, on that tremendous occasion, the murdered heathen than the “devout Christian,” his destroyer. Heathen, I call GUATEMOSIN, although he had been baptized. Such a baptism is a desecration of that holy ordinance.

Of the execution of GUATEMOSIN, Dr. ROB-

\* I am not defending Queen MARY, whose character and conduct cannot stand the test, in my opinion, of a severe and impartial scrutiny. But her long imprisonment and sufferings terminated by the axe of the executioner through the procurement of her persecutor and oppressor, have enlisted the sympathy of mankind in her favor, more or less, which may be right, for if she sinned much, she suffered much.

ATKINSON says: "On a slight suspicion, confirmed by very imperfect evidence, that GUATEMALOSIN had formed a scheme to shake off the yoke, and to excite his former subjects to take arms, CORTÉZ, without the formality of a trial," ordered the unhappy monarch, together with the caciques of Tezcuco and Tacuba, the two persons of greatest eminence in the Empire, to be hanged."

Of the same tragedy, Mr. PRESCOTT says: "The most probable explanation of the affair seems to be, that GUATEMALOSIN was a troublesome, and indeed formidable captive."

Here, then, we have the opinion of two celebrated historians, one our cotemporary, and the other almost so, whose opinions are clearly against the hypothesis of GUATEMALOSIN's conspiracy. And neither of these historians is unfavorable to CORTÉZ. One of them [Mr. PRESCOTT] is, on the contrary, his apologist and eulogist, as the following brief quotations from his *Conquest of Mexico* abundantly show: "CORTÉZ was not cruel, at least not cruel as compared with most of those who followed his iron trade; not wantonly cruel. He was not a vulgar conqueror. He did not conquer for the mere ambition of conquest." The bigotry of CORTÉZ should be termed only a failing."

*Bigotry only a failing!* Then CHARLES the Ninth, LOUIS the Fourteenth and QUEEN MARY, of England, who persecuted, massacred and roasted their Protestant subjects, and the whole hell-brood of inquisitors, who have murdered their thousands and tens and hundreds of thousands, can be charged only with a *failing*; for bigotry was the cause of all these atrocities.

Atas! for the morality of history! when such a writer as Mr. PRESCOTT can soften down to a mere failing such a fatal and infernal obliquity, from all that is good, and merciful, and just, as bigotry, that has produced as much mischief and misery as almost any other of the fierce and demoniac passions, and that has occasioned the shedding of blood enough the "multitudinous sea to incarnadine." If bigotry is only a failing, it would be difficult, in my judgment, to say what would be a crime. Mr. HALLAM has said, (*Middle Ages*), what is but too true, I fear, that "Historians have, in general, more indulgence for splendid crimes than for the weakness of virtue." CORTÉZ was a splendid criminal, and therefore he has been almost deified by them.

When you place CORTÉZ at an "immeasurable height" above NAPOLEON and all conquerors, because he was a "most sincere and devout Christian," I at first thought I had read the passage wrong; but, finding that it stands plainly as I quote, my next thought was, whether it might not be ironical; that cannot be, however, and it is clear that you mean precisely what you say. This, certainly, is ascribing to your favorite hero a crowning perfection; but never, in my opinion, was the word "Christian" applied with less propriety, taking the Scripture definition of religion to be the true one—"to do justice, to love mercy,

and to walk humbly;" "to forgive our enemies, and to do unto others what we would that they should do unto us." Which of these commands did CORTÉZ fulfil? Certainly not one, if there is any truth in history; nor can I be persuaded that there is one single Christian virtue that he practised. He was just such a Christian as PIZARRO, whose conduct in Peru was about like his own in Mexico. He was a fierce and bloody bigot; a sort of believer, who attended mass and murdered the poor Mexicans by thousands on the same day. Can that farrago of fanaticism, cruelty, and intolerance, professed and practised by CORTÉZ and his followers, be called the Christian religion? The term that Tacitus ignorantly applied to christianity at Pagan Rome, nearly 1,800 years ago—*exiliabilis superstitio*—a pernicious superstition—might well be applied to the faith transplanted from Spain to Mexico by such missionaries as CORTÉZ and his followers; and very different were the weapons with which they propagated it from those employed by Christ and his Apostles. These were not persuasion, argument, and the example of a blameless life; but fire, the sword, the halberd, and the rack. CORTÉZ a sincere and devout Christian! "Angels and ministers of grace defend us?"\*

I am not among the admirers of NAPOLEON. He was a traitor to the cause of human liberty, and what Mr. JEFFERSON, who but seldom erred in his opinion of men, called him—"the apostle of desolation." But, bold, bad, and unscrupulous as he might have been, I cannot admit that the Christian piety of CORTÉZ placed him at any height above him, measurable or "immeasurable." Most certain it is that NAPOLEON had no religion at all, although he died in communion with the Roman Catholic church. He was indifferent to all religions, and would just as readily have made the Jewish, or Mahomedan, or Mormon, (had it then existed,) the religion of the State as the Christian, would it have answered his purpose as well. But he persecuted no religion, tolerated all, protected all; the blood that he was the cause of shedding was shed by his ambition, not by his bigotry. In practice he was a better Christian than CORTÉZ; and, as to faith and creeds, I think it getting rather late in the day to suppose that he that practises no virtue, whose life is one continuous career of murder, rapine and robbery, can atone for his misdeeds by holding fast to a creed. This might pass 320 years ago, but will not in the year 1846. I will again call the old chronicler into court.

BERNAL DIAZ, not inferentially and by innuendo, but pretty plainly, establishes on CORTÉZ the fact, that he swindled his companions in arms out of their just share of the booty, after the capture of the city of Mexico, saying that they did not receive from him more than

\* It may not be amiss to observe, that what is said in the text respecting the Roman Catholic religion, is intended to apply to it only in the shape in which it was introduced into South America by the conquerors—CORTÉZ, PIZARRO, QUESADA, *cum multis aliis*.

\* GOMARA and TORQUEMADA say there was a trial; what a mockery it must have been!

a fifth or sixth of what was due them, even after deducting one-fifth of the whole for the King, and another fifth for himself. There is a hero for you! Why no bucanier chief would have been guilty of such baseness and ingratitude as this; for among the bucaniers the maxim, "honor among thieves," was held sacred. I say ingratitude, because if ever a commander owed a debt of gratitude to his soldiers, it was CORTEZ. For him they had braved all perils, and committed almost every crime; had become rebels to their sovereign, and imbrued their hands in the blood of their fellow-countrymen, (the troops of NARVAEZ;) had poured out their own blood like water; had endured all privations and suffered all that human nature could suffer; and when, at last, reduced to less, I believe, than one-third of their original number, they had accomplished the crowning work of the enterprise—the capture of the city—they are defrauded, cheated, swindled out of their share of their hard-earned, though ill-gotten spoils, by their own commander, that "sincere and devout Christian," for whom they had won so much glory and so much gold—for the fifth, to which he was entitled, was more than a princely fortune. Now, if the annals of human meanness and human baseness can furnish any thing meaner and baser than this, I know not where it is to be found.

To show that I do not stand alone in the opinion I have formed of CORTEZ, I will quote Lord BROUGHAM, than whom there is not perhaps an abler or more sagacious man; a friend, too, of human liberty; an admirer of our institutions, and the eulogist of WASHINGTON and JEFFERSON. In a biographical notice of Dr. ROBERTSON, written by him, he speaks of the "measures" of CORTEZ "as bold and masterly, but cruel and profligate;" a just sentence, and coming from a most competent judge.

At present I have nothing more to say, with reference to the character or conduct of CORTEZ, but will submit a brief vindication of "our own POCAHONTAS," whom you have, most mistakenly, I think, represented as being inferior to that "miracle of a woman, MARINA," the Indian interpreter of CORTEZ. In this opinion I differ with you *toto calo*—the whole length and breadth of the heavens. Was POCAHONTAS not "our own," still I should regard her as a much nobler character than the other, for she was her superior in all womanly virtues. MARINA was as good a Christian as CORTEZ, but not so good a one as POCAHONTAS. She was dexterous, courageous, talented, and devoted to the Spaniards. Her *liason* with CORTEZ, without the sanction of a nuptial benediction, may be in some degree excused, perhaps, on account of her unprotected situation, and the all-infecting, all-polluting licentiousness of the invaders. But what great qualities she possessed that "throw the other into the shade," I know not. If birth were any thing, POCAHONTAS has the advantage, for she was a princess. MARINA was not, though of noble blood; so says DIAZ, who does not give a very satisfactory account, however, of her family and origin. There is not to be found in all history, a more interesting

female character than POCAHONTAS. She was gentle, affectionate, and good-hearted; she exerted herself to maintain peace between the English and her father. Her efforts were always on the side of humanity, and to prevent the effusion of blood—MARINA's on the side of the oppressor, ravager and desolator of her country. POCAHONTAS became a Christian more than nominally; married a respectable Englishman, and her blood yet flows in the veins of persons of the first respectability in Virginia. Of that blood, one might be proud; not because she was a princess, but because she was a woman of a noble soul, and an ornament to her sex. She was "our own," too, which is something in my estimation. I think her superior than MARINA, throwing her entirely into the shade; and I think Captain JOHN SMITH, whose life she saved, a much more perfect hero and man than CORTEZ; for he possessed all the good qualities of the Spaniard, and none of the bad that so abounded in him. He was as enterprising, as chivalric, and as brave; and, as a man and a Christian, stands immeasurably higher; but his career not being emblazoned with blood and devastation—as he conquered no kingdoms, and sacked and destroyed no cities, exterminated no communities, dethroned no monarch, and murdered none, the historians notice him but briefly; for history, whose delight seems to be to record wicked actions, if they are but brilliant, and to exalt the cut-throat and robber into the hero, if but successful, takes not much pleasure in recording actions, however useful and meritorious they may be, unless connected with a great name; and if great, no matter how bad. Thus, even in the United States, the history of CORTEZ is much better known than that of Captain SMITH.

Passing over 320 years, I will now say something about another worthy, who has figured largely on the same theatre, on which CORTEZ "played such fantastic tricks before high heaven." This is SANTA ANNA. I do not recollect that you call him your "favorite hero," or a hero of any kind; but you express a pretty favorable opinion of him upon the whole, much more so than he deserves in my opinion; for, in my judgment, he is not much better in any respect than CORTEZ, and at an immeasurable distance behind him in courage and capacity, notwithstanding his "finely formed head and face," "indicative of talent, firmness and benevolence," according to "a distinguished American statesman,"—high authority about a political or financial question without doubt; but no better than yours or mine, or any other persons's, respecting SANTA ANNA's head and face, unless he is a physiognomist and phrenologist, and that does not appear; or, if he is, as I have no faith in either of those humbugs—physiognomy and phrenology—I should still be a little skeptical.

You consider SANTA ANNA to be a patriot, and wish to see him at the head of the government, though you say that he is avaricious, and admit that he is addicted to speculation and bribery, if you may believe "half" that you have heard. You may safely believe that half, and the other half too. It is but little consequence who is at the head of the Mexican government

under the present system. It must be either a military despot, or the tool of a military faction; and SANTA ANNA, bad as he is, may be perhaps not much worse than the man who would be, if he were not. PAREDES is, perhaps, one among the best of the military men of Mexico. That he (SANTA ANNA) is a patriot, though, I cannot believe, even upon your authority, which I grant to be high. I do not understand how any man can be a patriot who is the plunderer of his country; and that he is, you do not deny. No peculator, no receiver of bribes, can be devoted to the public weal. At least such was the old-fashioned doctrine among us in other days. Whether it can be said *tempora mutantur* or not, I do not pretend to decide. I hope it cannot be. God forbid it ever should.

This patriot, among other accomplishments, possesses that of being an adept in (*ritum teneatis*?) the noble and glorious science of—cock-fighting! It is the first time I recollect ever to have seen greatness, patriotism and cock-fighting in juxtaposition. We have heard a good deal of JULIUS CÆSAR, WASHINGTON, NAPOLEON and of other heroes, but nothing of their cock-fighting; and, in my humble judgment, there never was a great man who was an habitual cock-fighter; for the very plain reason, that a great mind could not let itself down, habitually, to such a pitiful and paltry amusement. But of this—*jam satis*.

SANTA ANNA told you that "General JACKSON was satisfied with his explanations of the massacre at the Alamo, and of FANNING's command;" and I grieve to think myself authorized by your silence, in drawing the inference that you, too, were, in some degree, satisfied, as far as regards his (SANTA ANNA's) own justification. I am not, nor can I persuade myself that General JACKSON was, until it comes from higher authority than the culprit himself. If there is any higher I have not heard of it, and if the old "Old Roman" ever expressed any satisfaction, it was, without doubt, qualified with an *if*—if all that the perpetrator of the enormity said in his exculpation was true. Was it true? Do you believe it? You do not say in your "Recollections," and I am sorry that you do not; for upon that point, above all others, you ought to have expressed an opinion, it seems to me. You call it an "unmitigated murder," it is true, but do not fix the murder on SANTA ANNA quite clearly enough. You say that "the massacre of FANNING's men is not without illustrious examples," to wit, the slaughter of the Turks at Jaffa, by BONAPARTE, and of our countrymen by the British Indians at the river Raisin. The slaughter of the Turks was what you would call an "unnecessary cruelty," and wholly without defence; but I think it pretty certain that there was no capitulation, stipulating that their lives should be saved. The want of this, though, could not justify the wholesale slaughter of them.\* The massacre at the river

Raisin was fully as atrocious as that of FANNING's detachment.

It may be, that according to the laws of war, which, respecting such cases as the storming of the fort at Alamo, are extremely rigorous, that massacre may be susceptible of some palliation, and but little either. In the case of FANNING, though the slaughter was what you pronounce it to be, "unmitigated murder," and SANTA ANNA the murderer, for he does not deny the capitulation, but alleges necessity as a justification for the slaughter; that the prisoners were near five hundred in number, and had secret arms, whilst the Mexican guard was but three hundred strong. Can you believe this? Is it credible? Never, in my opinion, did shuffling villany attempt to escape by a fouler falsehood. Would five hundred Americans, with arms, or without them, suffer themselves to be butchered in cold blood by three hundred Mexicans; and they, too, the timid, miserable creatures you represent them to be? Impossible! Had these been the relative numbers, a very different account of that affair would have been rendered, be assured. The Americans would have taken their muskets from them, and beaten their brains out with the butt ends.

SANTA ANNA, I admit, is not without some merit—he might be worse than he is, and you were very successful in prevailing upon him to spare the lives of your captive countrymen in his power. With respect to that matter he behaved, upon the whole, very well, though I cannot help thinking that you owed your success as much to his fears as to his good feelings; he preferred your friendship to your hostility. The former might be of service to him, as your work (the *Recollections*) shows it to have been; the latter might have been injurious, as no doubt it would; and as putting the prisoners

ern times;" and that from the moment the Turks "were permitted to surrender their arms, no consideration of prudence could deprive them of the rights they had acquired by the capitulation!" And JOMINI does not use the word capitulation in the sense in which we understand it generally—a stipulation in favor of life, as there was in the case of FANNING's detachment. He means, that the simple fact of consenting to receive the arms of an enemy, implies an understanding that his personal safety is guaranteed. At Jaffa there was no capitulation but this; with FANNING's there was an express stipulation, that the lives of the prisoners should be safe. And if JOMINI, so unhesitatingly condemns the "great captain" for his barbarity at Jaffa, what would he have said of SANTA ANNA's massacre, so much more atrocious in its character? The following are JOMINI's words:

Cet acte d'une feroce barbarie porta atteinte à la plus belle réputation des temps modernes. En vain on a voulu couvrir ce massacre de la impérieuse loi de la nécessité; les personnes de prisonniers sont sacrés; elles sont sous la sauvegarde de l'honneur; dès qu'on avait consenti à recevoir les armes de ces ennemis, aucune considération de prudence ne pouvait les priver des droits qu'ils s'étaient acquis par la capitulation.

\* Of the massacre at Jaffa, General JOMINI, than whom there is not a more competent judge, says, in his great work, *The Wars of the French Revolution*, "that it tarnished the greatest reputation (NAPOLEON'S) of mod-

to death could have been of no possible benefit to him, he wisely resolved to be governed by his interest, which was to be merciful, rather than by his instinct, which led him to shed blood. I am willing to admit, though, that he may not be so atrociously cruel and hard-hearted, but that he may be capable of doing a just and generous action when he is to gain by it, or even when it may be a matter of perfect indifference to him.

Here I should close my remarks, having nothing more to say about CORTEZ or SANTA ANNA; but there are a few other passages in your "Recollections" that particularly attracted my attention. A word about them.

General MILLER, the British consul general for the Sandwich Islands, said to you that he was "surprised that any standing army should be kept up in the United States." To this, your reply was, that you "thought so, too; and that it was somewhat remarkable, that the most creditable achievements of American arms had been in battles where the larger part of the troops engaged were militia.

I am not at all surprised that an Englishman should express an opinion that we need no standing army; but, am, somewhat, that an American statesman and diplomatist should concur in that opinion. It would suit the English extremely well, if we would abolish both army and navy, for Great Britain has, some time since, most benevolently manifested a willingness to act as constable-general of the ocean—as General CASS says, in his very able essay on Impressment and Search—adopting and enforcing such police regulations as might best suit her; and, doubtless, influenced by that maternal and affectionate kindness she has ever felt for us, would be equally willing to take charge, also, of our interests ashore, as well as of those afloat. A wolf once persuaded a shepherd to let him take charge of his flock, protesting a great affection for that gentle and defenceless animal, the sheep; and he told the truth, for he was very partial to mutton. I need not say what followed.

I will do myself the justice to say, *en passant*, however, that I indulge no rancorous anti-Anglican feeling. England is a great country—at present, the *grande nation*; but we will get ahead of her in less than fifty years. The English are a great people, and we ought to be proud of being descended from such a stock. With any other people for our ancestors, we would not have been what we now are; and never could be, in my opinion, what our destiny has in reserve for us.

It is not going a little too far to say, that the most creditable achievements of our arms have been in battles where the militia were the most numerous? That they have behaved admirably on many occasions, have fought courageously and heroically, I take both pleasure and pride in saying; but, at the same time, I think it cannot be questioned that some of the most creditable achievements, for instance, the bloody and severely-contested battles in Canada, in 1814, have taken place in the entire absence of any militia force. Those battles were the most severely contested, I believe, of any that have been fought in this part of the continent. There, truly, was "the tug of war."

Our soldiers met and conquered, man for man, or with inferior numbers, the best troops to be found in Europe, probably—the conquerors of NAPOLEON's veterans. No militia could have done that, and you have given the reason, the unanswerable reason, in your own book—the want of discipline. Without that, militia cannot meet regulars in the open field, and a fair field fight "a regular pounding match," as the Duke of WELLINGTON called their battle of Waterloo, is the decisive test of the skill and efficiency of troops. Elsewhere the militia may be very formidable. This is clear, without going so far as to adopt the opinion that you seem to have adopted, of supposing the disciplined soldier to be five times as efficient as the undisciplined. Whether this odds exists or not, depends upon the kind of militia in question. Between American regulars and Mexican militia there may be that difference; but certainly not that, or any, between Mexican regulars and American militia, unless it be in favor of the latter.

Instead of having no regular army, we ought, in my opinion, to have one of at least twenty thousand rank and file; and this, if not already proven by our present Mexican war, will be proven by the time it is finished. If General TAYLOR had had a force of fifteen or twenty thousand regulars when he first marched to the Rio Grande, he might now be in the city of Mexico, had it been necessary to go that far to "conquer a peace;" and the war would not then have cost one-half of what it will under the militia system. Militia can well be relied upon for defensive purposes, but are not equally efficient for offensive war; though with such a commander as General JACKSON, they would be equal to any achievement almost.\*

One objection with us to a large standing army, as one of twenty thousand would be

\* And they have recently performed wonders at Monterey, under the command of General TAYLOR—fighting and storming batteries with the steadiness and resolution of veterans.

The foregoing note was written before the battles of Buena Vista, Cerro Gordo, Churubusco and others, in which our armies in Mexico covered themselves with glory. In those severe engagements the volunteers fought heroically—with the valor and firmness of veterans, which discipline as well as their native courage enabled them to do. But I am not writing their panegyric: I am not equal to the task: Would that I were! Then it would soon be written.

Nevertheless, nothing that has been achieved or that could be achieved, can remove the objections to relying on militia force for all purposes, dispensing with a *regular* one: These are great expensiveness and great consumption of life. Were our commanders to be always SCOTTS, TAYLORS and BUTLERS, though in the camp and in the field, they would do all that skill and courage and patriotism could do, yet, they could not prevent the enormous expense and the enormous mortality, ever and inevitably attendant upon military operations carried on, on a large scale with a militia force exclusively—serving for three, six and twelve months.—May, 1848.

called, is the expense; but this is a misconception; for, upon an average of twenty years, the regular system would be found to be the cheapest; that is, it would cost less money, saying nothing of its superior effectiveness. Economy pleads, therefore, for the regular force, and so does humanity, for there would be a great saving of human life. There is another objection to it, though, sometimes made, which I will notice; it is, that standing armies are dangerous to the liberties of a country. This, to my mind, is but a phantom in the United States. That we should have any thing to apprehend from an army of twenty thousand seems to me ridiculous, or from an hundred thousand. Who could corrupt that army, if we had it, and prevail upon it to declare against the country? General JACKSON exercised as much influence over the public mind as any other man ever has—as much as General WASHINGTON—and the time never was, in my opinion, that he could have engaged one hundred men to unite with him in a war upon our liberties, had it been possible for that noble patriot to make such an attempt; nor could General WASHINGTON, or any other general, past, present, or to come, provided we maintain our present institutions unimpaired; for the plain reason that ours is, what is called—a government of the people, in which the humblest citizen knows and feels that he has an interest, and of which he is a constituent.

You say, "I want no more territory, for we have already too much. If I were to make an exception to this remark, it would be to acquire California."

In this sentiment we do not agree exactly. I do not think we have too much territory, though with California we should have enough. That I hope will be acquired, either by purchase in peace, or by conquest in war, if the war must continue. It is of no use to Mexico; never will be; never can be. It is too remote from the centre, for a country where the federal principle can never be practised or understood probably; and as the population will soon be mostly American, it must, in the course of human events, separate from Mexico, and it will form either an independent state, will join the United States, or will fall into the hands of Great Britain.

I cannot subscribe to the opinion you express when you say, "I know no great people who have not been crowded into a small space—the Egyptians, the Romans, the Greeks, the Jews and the English."

This has somewhat the appearance of a *post hoc, ergo propter hoc* argument—that the people you name have been great, because their territories were small—a strange conclusion to arrive at, I think, and one not authorized by facts. The people you name were great, because the elements of greatness were inherent in their races, and because their geographical position, and other circumstances were favorable to their development. The Jews, however, ought to be excepted, their government being a theocracy; God himself directing and superintending their national affairs; whereas, judging from the manner in which the governments of the Old World, and in many parts of the New, are conducted generally, we might

suppose them to be under the guidance of a very different kind of a ruler. For the Jews you might substitute the Carthaginians—a great people crowded into a small space. But I cannot adopt your theory; there are so many small states that are not great, and so many large ones that are, that your rule cannot be received, either as a universal or as a general one, or as a rule at all. Rome was great before she was large, and great afterwards. China was both large and great before ROMULUS and REMUS sucked the wolf at Rome, [if suck her they did,] then a forest; and will be, probably, when the site even of the "eternal city" will be a matter of dispute among antiquaries.

"Time doubts of Troy, and time will doubt Rome."

Then there is Russia, with her sixty millions of inhabitants and colossal power, greater and more powerful than ever Rome was. The Roman Empire, all the provinces and tributaries included, was twice as populous, perhaps, at one period, as Russia now is, but the real and effective strength of the latter is greater than that of Rome in her best days. The proof of this is, that were there no more formidable barriers presented to the ambition of Russia, than there were to that of Rome, all Europe would be at her mercy in less than twelve months. And France, in the time of NAPOLEON, when her territory, including Italy, &c., comprised nearly half a million of square miles—was she not great? Is she not yet? And still she is not, by any means, a small state in point of size. England is great, but without doubt she owes a portion of her greatness to her foreign possessions. India lost, she would soon be reduced to a second rate power. And ourselves, the "model republic," have we not some pretensions to greatness? Which surely we could not have, if national deterioration were a consequence of great territorial extent, or of territorial acquisition. In some respects, we are unchallengeably in advance of all the world—as regards form of government, civil institutions, freedom of conscience, &c., &c. To the example of the United States, Europe is indebted for a somewhat humanized criminal code, and for ameliorated institutions in general; and, above all, the United States took the first step towards abolishing the slave-trade, "the biggest outrage ever practised on our nature," as Dr. CHALMERS truly says, and which, to the shame of civilization and of humanity, yet flourishes. And it would be well if the declaimers and philanthropists at Exeter Hall, (London) and our own ultra abolitionists would direct their ire and their efforts against this outrage, instead of meddling with the slavery in the United States, a matter nowise within their jurisdiction and cognizance—one in which they have no interest, over which they have no control, and for which they are in no manner responsible. By their intermeddling, they may do much mischief, but will most assuredly never achieve any good.

If we cannot be a great people without being "crowded into a small space," the acquisition of California, which you and I are in favor of, would be a great oversight, for it is of itself an extensive country. But I



have no fears, either of its preventing or of its impairing our greatness.

If small States were great because they are small, what a wonderful people the good citizens of San Marino ought to be! that vast republic in Italy, that has twenty-two square miles of territory and eight thousand inhabitants! Or some of the German principalities, too diminutive to find a place on the map, and whose contingent to the military force of the Confederation would be three quarters of a man or such a matter.

I am now going to close this long letter. So far I have differed with you generally; but I have a word to say, to show you that, although I have been wielding the pen of a critic, in my heart there is nothing towards you but respect and good will. I have to say, then, that for the manner in which you discharged your duties

when minister to Mexico, and for your kind and hospitable conduct towards your fellow-countrymen and the Texans—not then your countrymen—whom you found prisoners, and in distress and danger, you are entitled, in my opinion, to great credit. But for your humane and resolute interference, in their behalf, many of them would have been put to death without doubt. You saved them. You give the credit to SANTA ANNA; I give it to you, to whom it is due.

You say, "I have no words to express the scorn that I feel for one, who, in a foreign country, or in his intercourse with one, could for a moment remember our party dissensions." This is spoken like an American, and like a patriot. The sentiment is a noble and a generous one; and I would say to every citizen, and to every public agent abroad—Go thou and do likewise.

P.

# APPENDIX.

*Extracts from Captain John Smith's General History of Virginia, New England, and the Summer Isles, &c.*

Having feasted him [Captain Smith] after their best barbarous manner they could, a long consultation was held, but the conclusion was, two great stones were brought before Powhatan; then as many as could lay hands on him, dragged him to them and thereon laid his head, and being ready with their clubs to beate out his brains, Pocahontas, the King's dearest daughter, when no intreaty could prevail, got his head in her arms and laid her own upon his to save him from death. Whereat, the Emperor was contented he should live to make him hatchets, and her bells, beads, and copper; for they thought him as well of all occupations as themselves. For the King himself will make his own robes, shoes, bows, arrows, pots, plant, hunt, or do any thing as well as the rest.

They say he (SMITH) bore a pleasant shew, But sure his heart was sad,  
For who can pleasant be, and rest,  
That lives in fear and dread;  
And having life suspected, doth  
It still suspected lead.

Now every once in foure or five days, POCAHONTAS, with her attendants, brought him so much provision, that saved many of their lives, that els for all this had starved with hunger.

Thus from numbe death, our good God sent reliefe,  
The sweet asswager of all other griefe.

But to conclude our peace—thus it happened. Captain ARGALL having entered into great acquaintance with JAPAZAWS, an old friend of Captain SMITH's, and so to all our nation, ever since hee discovered the countrie. Hard by him, there was POCAHONTAS, whom Captain SMITH's relations intituleth the numparell (nonpareil) of Virginia; and though she had been many times a preserver of him and the whole colonie, yet, still this accident, [her captivity,] she was never seen at Jamestown since his departure, &c.

Long before this, Master JOHN ROLFE, an honest gentleman and of good behaviour, had been in love with POCAHONTAS, and she with him; which thing, at that instant, I made known to Sir THOMAS DALE, by a letter from him wherein hee intreated his advice, and she

acquainted her brother with it, which resolution, Sir THOMAS DALE well approved. The brute (report) of this marriage came soon to the knowledge of POHATAN, a thing acceptable to him as appeared by his sudden consent, &c.

*Extract from Captain Smith's Memorial to the Queen of England on behalf of Pocahontas.*

And this relief, [provisions,] most gracious Queene, was commonly brought us by this lady, POCAHONTAS; notwithstanding all these passages, when inconsistent fortune turned our peace to warre, this tender Virgin would still not spare to visit us, and by her our jaries have been oft appeased and our wants still supplied; were it the policie of her father thus to employ her, or the ordinance of God thus to make her his instrument, or her extraordinarie affection to our nation, I know not; but of this I am sure, when her father, with the utmost of his policy and power, sought to surprise mee, having but eighteen with mee, the darke night could not affright her from coming through the irksome woods, and with watered eyes, gave me intelligence, with her best advice, to escape his furie; which had he knowne, hee had surely slaine her. Jamestown, with her wild traine, she has freely frequented as her father's habitation; and during the time of two or three yeeres, she, next under God, was still the instrument to preserve this colonie from death, famine and utter confusion; which if in those times had once been dissolved, Virginia might have lain [lain] as it was at at our first arrival to this day, &c.

The first Christian (POCAHONTAS) ever of that nation, the first Virginian ever spake English or had a child in marriage by an Englishman; a matter, surely, if my meaning bee truly considered and well understood, worthy a Prince's understanding." &c.

"The Treasurer, Councill, and companie, having well furnished Captaine SAMUEL ARGALL, the Lady POCAHONTAS, alias REBECCA, with her husband and others, in the good ship called the George, it pleased God, at Gravesend, to take this young lady to his mercie; where shee made (caused) not more sorrow for her unexpected death, than joy to the beholders to heare and see her make so religious and goodly an end. Her little child, THOMAS ROLFE, therefore, was left at Plimouth with Sir LEWIS STUCKLEY, and desired the keeping of it."

*Extracts from Stith's History of Virginia.*

"He [Captain ARGALL] there found the English boy, HENRY SPILMAN, preserved by POCAHONTAS and those Indians from the fury of POWHATAN. He was a young gentleman well descended," &c.

"What was the reason of her [POCAHONTAS] absconding from Werowocomoco, cannot easily be judged; except it was to withdraw herself from being a witness to the frequent butcheries of the English, whose folly and rashness, after SMITH's departure, put it out of her power to save them."

"In the mean while, POCAHONTAS, or the LADY REBECCA, as they now affected to call her, was kindly received in England. She was by this time well instructed in Christianity, spoke good and intelligible English, and was become very civil and ceremonious after the English fashion. She was likewise delivered of a son, of whom she was extremely fond, and the treasurer and company gave order for the handsome maintenance of both her and her child. Besides which her company was courted, and she kindly treated by many persons of highest rank and quality in the nation. There hath been indeed a constant tradition, that the King became jealous and was highly offended at Mr. ROLFE for marrying a Princess. That anointed pedant [James the First] had so high an idea of the *jus divinum* and indefeasible right of POWHATAN, that he held it a great crime and misdemeanor for any private gentleman to mingle with his inferior blood. And he might perhaps likewise think, consistently with his own principles, that the right of these dominions would thereby be vested in Mr. ROLFE's posterity."

He [the son of POCAHONTAS] left behind him an only daughter, who was married to Col. ROBERT BOLLING, by whom she left an only son, the late Major JOHN BOLLING, who was father to the present Col. JOHN BOLLING and several daughters, married to Col. RICHARD RANDOLPH, Col. JOHN FLEMING, Dr. Wm. GAY, Mr. THOMAS ELDRIDGE, and Mr. JAMES MURRAY. So that the remnant of the imperial family of Virginia, which long ran in a single person, is now increased and branched out into a very numerous progeny."

*Extracts from Sir William Keith's History of Virginia.*

"The Indians, with all the many sports they could devise, spent the time till night, when they withdrew and returned to Powhatan, who was making every thing ready to surround the house and surprise Captain SMITH while he was at supper. But Providence once more interfered in his favor, and sent that humane creature, the Princess Pocahontas, who ventured herself in a dark night through the woods to advertise the President, [Captain SMITH,] that her father was preparing to send him an elegant supper; but in case the people that brought it should miscarry in executing the orders they had received to kill him while he was eating, then the King, with all the forces he could raise, was in readiness to attack him and cut them all off."

"This incomparable lady, [POCAHONTAS,] with a tender flood of tears, told her story in

so moving a manner, still beseeching Captain SMITH to be gone, that the generous President used all possible means to comfort her, and offered her several valuable presents, which she refused, saying she was a dead woman if any thing could be found about her. So she departed unobserved by any of her father's people, and in an hour's time came eight or ten lusty tall Indians, loaded with platters full of venison and other food. They were very importunate to see the President and his company sit down to their supper, intreating at the same time that he would order the matches to be put out, alleging that the smoke made them sick; but instead of that, the President obliged each of them to taste of every dish that they had brought; and then ordered them back to tell POWHATAN that he was ready for his coming, with all the force he could bring."

*Extract from Chief Justice Marshall's Life of Washington.*

"They [the Indians] conducted him [Captain SMITH] in triumph through several towns to the palace of POWHATAN, the most potent King in that part of the country. There he was doomed to be put to death by laying his head upon a stone and beating out his brains with clubs. He was led to the place of execution, and his head bowed down for the purpose of death, when POCAHONTAS, the King's darling daughter, then about thirteen years of age, whose entreaties for his life had been ineffectual, rushed between him and his executioner, and holding his head in her arms, and laying hers upon it, arrested the fatal blow. Her father was then prevailed upon to spare his life, and after a great many savage ceremonies, he was sent back to Jamestown."

*Extracts from Doctor Belknap's American Biography.*

"He [POWHATAN] retired in the evening and formed a design to surprise SMITH and his people at their supper; and had it not been for the affectionate friendship of POCAHONTAS, it would probably have been effected. This amiable girl, at the risk of her life, stole from the side of her father, and passing in the dark through the woods, told SMITH, with tears in her eyes, of the plot, and then as privately returned."

"The fame of an Indian princess [POCAHONTAS] excited great curiosity in London; and SMITH had the address to write a handsome letter to the Queen, setting forth the merits of his friend, and the eminent services she had done him and the colony of Virginia. She was introduced by the lady DE LA WARRE; the queen and royal family received her with much complacency, and she proved herself worthy of their notice and respect. At her first interview with SMITH she called him father; and because he did not immediately return the salutation, and call her child, she was so overcome with grief that she hid her face and would not speak for some time. She was ignorant of the ridiculous affectation that reigned in the court of JAMES, which forbid SMITH assuming the title of father to the daughter of a King; and when informed of it she despised it, passionately declaring that she loved him as a father, and had treated him as

such in her own country, and would be his child wherever she went. The same pedantic affectation caused her husband to be looked upon as an offender, for having, though a subject, invaded the mysterious right of royalty, by marrying above his rank. This marriage, however, proved beneficial to the colony."

*Extracts from the Rev. Jared Sparks's American Biography.—Life of Capt. John Smith.*

"POCAHONTAS, the King's daughter—at that time a child of twelve or thirteen years of age—finding that her piteous entreaties to save the life of SMITH were unavailing, rushed forward, clasped his head in her arms, and laid her own upon it, determined either to save his life or to share his fate. Her generous and heroic conduct touched her father's iron heart, and the life of the captain was spared, to be employed in making hatchets for himself and beads for his daughter.

"The account of this beautiful and most touching scene, familiar as it is to every one, can hardly be read with unmoistened eyes. The incident is so dramatic and startling, that it seems to preserve the freshness of novelty amidst a thousand repetitions. We could almost as reasonably expect an angel to have come down from heaven and rescued the captive, as that his deliverer should have sprung from the bosom of POWHATAN's family. The universal sympathies of mankind, and the best feelings of the human heart, have redeemed this scene from the obscurity which, in the progress of time, gathers over all but the most important events. It has pointed a thousand morals, and adorned a thousand tales. Innumerable bosoms have throbbed, and are yet to throb, with generous admiration for this daughter of a people whom we have been too ready to underrate.

*Extracts from the History of the United States—by George Bancroft. (Mr. Bancroft, late Secretary of the Navy, and now U. S. Minister at London.)*

"SMITH had easily won the confiding fondness of the Indian maiden, [POCAHONTAS,] and now the impulse of mercy awakened within her breast; she clung firmly to his neck, as his head was bowed to receive the strokes of the tomahawk. Did the childlike superstition of her kind reverence her interference as a token from a superior power? Her fearlessness and her entreaties persuaded the council to spare the agreeable stranger, who might make hatchets for her father, and rattles and strings of beads for herself, the favorite child. The barbarians, whose decision had long been held in suspense by the mysterious awe which SMITH had inspired, now resolved to receive him as a friend, and to make him a partner of their councils. They tempted him to join their bands, and lend assistance in an attack upon Jamestown; and when his decision of character succeeded in changing the current of their thoughts, they dismissed him with mutual promises of friendship and benevolence. Thus the captivity of SMITH did itself become a benefit to the colony; for he had not only observed with care the country between the James and the Potomac, and had

gained some knowledge of the language and manners of the natives, but he now established a peaceful intercourse between the English and the tribes of POWHATAN; and with her companions, the child who had rescued him from death, afterwards came every few days to the fort with baskets of corn for the garrison.

"Returning to Jamestown, SMITH found the colony reduced to forty men, and of these the strongest were again preparing to escape with the pinnacle. The third attempt at desertion he repressed at the hazard of his life. Thus passed the few first months of colonial existence in discord and misery; despair relieved, and ruin prevented, by the fortitude of one man, and the benevolence of an Indian girl."

"A foraging party of the colonists, headed by ARGALL, had stolen away the daughter of Powhatan, and now demanded of her father a ransom. The indignant chief prepared rather for hostilities. But JOHN ROLFE, a young Englishman, winning the favor of POCAHONTAS, desired her in marriage; and with the favor of Sir THOMAS DALE, and to the express delight of the savage chieftain, the nuptials were solemnized according to the rites of the English church. Every historian of Virginia commemorates them with approbation; distinguished men trace their descent from this union; the Indian wife, instructed in the English language, and bearing an English name, sailed with her husband for England. The daughter of the wilderness possessed the mild elements of female loveliness, half concealed, as if in the bud, and rendered the more beautiful by the childlike simplicity with which her education in the savannahs of the New World had invested her. How could she fail to be caressed at court and admired in the city? As a wife, and as a young mother, her conduct was exemplary. She had been able to contrast the magnificence of European life with the freedom of the western forests; and now as she was preparing to return to America, at the age of twenty-two, she fell a victim to the English climate; saved, as if by the hand of mercy, from beholding the extermination of the tribes from which she sprung, leaving a spotless name, and dwelling in memory under the form of perpetual youth."

*Extracts from Dr. Robertson's History of America.*

"POCAHONTAS, the favorite daughter of the great POWHATAN, to whose intercession Captain SMITH was indebted for his life, persevered in her partial attachment to the English; and as she frequently visited their settlements, where she was always received with respectful hospitality, her admiration of their acts and manners continued to increase. During this intercourse her beauty, which is represented as far superior to that of her countrywomen, made such an impression on the heart of Mr. ROLFE, a young man of rank in the colony, that he warmly solicited her to accept him as a husband. Where manners are simple, courtship is not tedious; neither artifice prevents, nor ceremony forbids, the heart from declaring its sentiments. Pocahontas readily gave her

consent, *Dale* encouraged the alliance, and *Powhatan* did not disapprove it," &c.

*Extract from Graham's History of the United States of North America.*

"The colony of Virginia had once been saved in the person of its own deliverer, Captain *SMITH*, by *POCAHONTAS*, the daughter of the Indian king *Powhatan*.

"Here he (*Argall*) learned that *Pocahontas* was living in retirement at no great distance from him, and hoping by possession of her person to obtain such an ascendant over *Powhatan*, as would insure an ample contribution of provisions, he prevailed on her, by some artifice, to come on board his vessel, and then set sail with her to Jamestown, where she was detained in a state of honorable captivity. But *Powhatan*, more indignant at such treachery than overcome by his misfortune, rejected with scorn the demand of a ransom; he even refused to hold any communication with the robbers who still kept his daughter a prisoner; declaring, nevertheless, that if she were restored to him he would forget the injury; and, feeling himself at liberty to regard the authors of it as friends, would gratify all their wishes."

"During her residence in the colony, *Pocahontas*, who has been described as a woman possessed of uncommon beauty, gained the affections of a young man named *Rolfe*, a person of rank and estimation among the planters, who forthwith offered her his hand, and with her approbation, and the warm encouragement of the governor, solicited the consent of *Powhatan* to their marriage. This the old prince readily bestowed, and sent some of his relations to attend the ceremonial, which was performed with extraordinary pomp, and laid the foundation of a sincere and firm friendship between his tribe and the English."

*Extract from Purchas.—His Pilgrimage.—London, 1626.—Unus deus una veritas.*

"*Samuel Argall*, in the year 1613, affirmed likewise, that hee found the State of Virginia farre better than was reported. In one voyage they had gotten 1,100 bushels of corne. They found a slow kind of cattle, as big as kine, (buffalo?) which were good meate; and a medicinable sort of earth. They took *Pokohuntis*, (*Powhatan's* dearest daughter) prisoner, a matter of good consequence to them, of best to her, by this means being become a Christian, and married to Master *Rolph*, an English gentleman."

*Extract from Histoire Generale de Voyages.—Vol. 14, Paris, 1757.*

En 1612, on vit arriver deux vaisseaux avec de nouvelles provisions. *Argall* qui en commandoit un fut envoye a *Potowmeck* pour y former une liaison de commerce. Il y trouva une princesse Indienne nomme *Pocahontas*, fille du chef de *Powhatan*, et l'ayant engagee à passer sur son vaisseau sous pretexte de lui rendre les honneurs dus à son rang, il l'amena prisonniere à Jamestown, dans la vue de faire servir sa delivrance à conclure une paix solide avec son pere. Mais le fier Indien fut si vive-

ment piqué de cet outrage que malgré la tendresse du sang, on ne put lui faire accepter d'autres conditions que le mariage de sa fille avec un gentilhomme Anglais nomme *Jean Rolfe*. Cette marque d'estime, qu'il jugea sincere, le fit consentir à se lier par un traite."

[Translation.]

"In 1612, two vessels arrived with a supply of provisions. *Argall*, who commanded one of them, was sent to the Potomac for the purpose of trading. There he found an Indian princess named *Pocahontas*, daughter of the chief *Powhatan*, and having prevailed upon her to go on board of his vessel, under the pretext of paying her the honors due to her rank, he carried her to Jamestown, hoping to secure, as the price of her liberty, a lasting peace with her father. But the Indian was so deeply offended at this outrage, that notwithstanding the force of blood, he could not be prevailed upon to accept any other conditions than the marriage of his daughter with an English gentleman named *John Rolfe*. This mark of esteem, which he supposed to be sincere, induced him to consent to bind himself by a treaty."

*Extract from Histoire de la Virginie, traduite de l'Anglois.—Amsterdam, 1707.*

Le Capitaine *Jean Smith*, qui étoit alors en Angleterre, n'eut pas plutôt appris l'arrivée de *Pocahontas* à Portsmouth, qu'il n'oublia rien pour marquer sa reconnaissance. Il avoit été condamné par le pere de cette princesse à avoir le tête cassée, et lors qu'il l'avoit sur le bloc elle mit la sienne tout auprès, de sorte qu'on n'osa frapper le coup. Il devoit s'embarquer incessamment pour la Nouvelle Angleterre, et dans la crainte qu'il ne manqua l'occasion de lui temoigner sa gratitude avant qu'elle se rendit à Londres, il presenta un placet à la Reine en sa faveur. La Reine fit de grands honneurs à *Pocahontas* sur ce que le Capitaine *Smith* lui avoit representé."

[Translation.]

Captain *John Smith*, who was then in England, as soon as he heard that *Pocahontas* had arrived at Plymouth, left nothing undone to show his gratitude. He had been condemned by the father of this princess to have his brains beat out, and when his head was on the block, she placed hers near it so that the blow could not be struck. He was about to sail for New England, and fearing that he might lose the occasion of testifying his gratitude towards her before she would reach London, he presented a petition to the Queen in her favor. The Queen, in consequence of Captain *Smith's* representations, paid great honors to *Pocahontas*.

*Extract from Warden's L'Art de verifier les Dates.—Vol. 9.*

*Pocahontas* étant débarquée à Plymouth le 12 Juin, fut traitée comme fille de prince, sous le titre de Lady Rebecca, et présentée à la cour de la reine *Anne* par Lady *Delaware*. Elle y fut tres bien accueillie par suite d'une lettre ou requête du Capitaine *Smith*, dans laquelle il exprimait toute la reconnaissance qu'il portait à cette princesse pour avoir risqué sa

vie afin de le sauver. "Ni les ténèbres de la nuit, dit il, ni l'épaisseur des bois, ne l'empêcheront de me venir trouver et de me conseiller les larmes aux yeux de ne point me livrer à la fureur de son pere, qu'il aurait tuée s'il avait eu le moindre soupçon de sa demarche."

"Durant l'espace de deux ou trois années, ce fut elle qui après Dieu garantit cette colonie de la famine et d'une entière desolation."

[Translation.]

*Pocahontas* having landed at Plymouth the 12th of June, was treated as a prince's daughter, under the title of the Lady *Rebecca*, and was presented to the court by Lady *Delaware*. She was well received, in consequence of a letter or petition from Captain *Smith*, in which he expressed the gratitude he owed this princess for having risked her life to save his. Neither the darkness of the night, said he, nor the dense forest, prevented her from seeking me, and from counselling me, with tears in her eyes, not to expose myself to the fury of her father, who would have put her to death had he suspected her. For the space of two or three years it was she who, under God, preserved the colony from famine and from utter ruin.

*Extract from Londonio's Storia delle Colonie Inglesi in America. Milan, 1812.*

Mentre i salvaggi stavano già colle mazze alzate per ucciderlo [*Smith*] *Pocahontas* che aveva inutilmente perorato presso il padre a di lui favore si getta fra mezzo a col suo corpo gli fa scudo. Quest'atto generoso commosse talmente l'animo *Powhatan* che cedendo alle preghiere della figlia consentì a rimandarlo illeso e libero a *Jamestown*.

[Translation.]

Whilst the savages stood ready with unlifted clubs to kill him, [*Captain Smith*,] *Pocahontas*, who had in vain besought her father to save him, threw herself in the way, and protected him with her body. This generous action so wrought upon the mind of *Powhatan*, that, granting the prayer of his daughter, he consented to send him back unharmed and free to *Jamestown*.

*Extracts from Die Geschichte der Vereinigten Staaten von Nord-Amerika. By Doctor Lewis Ruffahl, Berlin, 1832.*

"*Smith* beugte das Haupt über einen Stein, um von des *Sachem's* aufgehobener Keule den Todesstreich zu empfangen, aber in demselben Augenblick stürzte sich *Pocahontas*, *Powhatan's* geliebteste Tochter, zwischen den Gefangenen und ihren Vater, und nur Gewalt vermochte sie von der Stelle zu reissen. Das Mitleid und der Heldenmuth des Mädchen's erschütterten den *Sachem*, und *Smith* erhielt die Freiheit für das Versprechen ihm einen Schleifstein und zwei Kanonen zu überlieffen. Die unüberwindliche Schwierigkeit Feldstücke

fortzuschaffen, nöthigte indess die Eingeborenen sich des Besitzes derselben zu entschlagen, und *Smith* versöhnte bald darauf ihre Fürsten durch einen freundschaftlichen Besuch und andere Geschenke."

"*Pocahontas* war durch die Verrätherei eines Indianischen Häuptlings in die Gewalt der Engländer gerathen, und wurde trotz ihrer vielen Verdienste um die Ansiedler als Gefangene nach *Jamestown* geführt, wo die kunstlose Liebenswürdigkeit eines Kindes der Natur ihr schnell das Hertz eines jungen Mannes von Stand und Verdienst, Namens *Rolfe*, gewann. Sie erwiderte seine Zuneigung, aber der Stolz des grossen *Sachem's* verschmähte einen fremden weissen Mann und einen Feind seinen Sohn zu nennen. Doch endlich willigte auch *Powhatan* ein; die Vermählung ward mit grosser Pracht gefeiert, und nicht lange darauf gingen *Rolfe* und seine junge Gemahlinn nach England, wo die Prinzessin mit allen ihr gebührenden Ehrenbezeugungen aufgenommen ward, und nach sorgfältiger Belehrung über die Wahrheiten der Christlichen Religion getauft ward. Sie starb aber kurzze Zeit nachher als sie im Begriff war nach Virginien zurückzukehren, wo noch jetzt manche ehrenwerthe Familien *Powhatan* und *Pocahontas* unter ihre Ahnen zählen."

[Translation.]

*Smith* placed his head upon a large stone in order to receive the stroke from the *Sachem's* uplifted club; but at the same moment *Pocahontas*, *Powhatan's* favorite daughter, rushed between the prisoner and her father, and could only be removed by force. The courage and compassion of the maiden moved the *Sachem*, and *Smith* obtained his liberty by promising him a grindstone and two pieces of artillery. But the great difficulty of furnishing the cannon obliged the natives to forego them, and *Smith* soon satisfied the prince by paying him a friendly visit and making him other presents."

"*Pocahontas* was betrayed through the treachery of a petty chief into the power of the English, who, notwithstanding the many and meritorious services to the colonists, carried her a prisoner to *Jamestown*, where the artless amiability of the child of nature soon won the heart of a young Englishman of rank and merit, named *Rolfe*. She reciprocated his affection, but the pride of the great *Sachem* revolted at calling a stranger, a white man, and an enemy, his son. But *Powhatan* consented at last. The marriage was celebrated with great splendor, and *Rolfe* and his young bride went soon afterwards to England, where the princess was received with well merited honors, and after being carefully instructed in the truths of the Christian religion, was baptized. She died soon afterwards, when about to return to Virginia, where many worthy families yet reckon *Powhatan* and *Pocahontas* among their ancestry."

# CONQUEST OF PERU.

BY WM. H. PRESCOTT.

I propose making a few remarks in the spirit of liberal and friendly criticism on Mr. Prescott's *Conquest of Peru*—a work with which I have been delighted and instructed, as tens of thousands besides myself have been, which does honor to the head and heart of the author, and to the literature of his country, or to English literature, if that phrase is more comprehensive and complimentary—a work, which ranks among the best historical productions in any modern language, and which will be regarded as a classic in the department of history, as long as the subject of which it treats continues to be viewed with any interest by the reading portion of mankind.

Having premised this, I cannot be suspected, I flatter myself, of playing the part of a critic under the influence of any prejudice or fault-finding propensity. I shall certainly praise much more than I shall blame, though I intend to point out a few slight blemishes—not to disparage the work which I delight to honor—but to enable the author, should my humble and unpretending annotations happen to come under his notice, to make corresponding corrections, provided he concurs with me in my views.

Of Mr. Prescott's style in the *Conquest*, it may be said, perhaps, if severely scrutinized, that it is rather florid and figurative; but were it less so, his history would not be either as dramatic or as eloquent, or as attractive as it now is. The style, therefore, seems to be well adapted to the subject, though it certainly is not as concise and as severe as are some of the ancient, and, also, some of the modern historical *chef d'oeuvres*.

In vol. 1, page 65, of the *Conquest*, Mr. Prescott speaks of the "Andes or copper mountains, so termed by the natives, though they might with more reason have been called mountains of gold."

Silver mountains would I think have been nearer the fact than either copper or gold, for that metal is more abundant in the Andes than either of the others. It is a saying in Peru—*oro en la costa y plata en la sierra*—gold on the coast and silver in the mountains.

Page 61.—"Charity doled out drop by drop, as it were from the frozen reservoirs of the Parish."

This is a compliment paid to ancient Peruvian legislation, with respect to the subject of poor laws, a little at the expense of the legislation of modern states, as wanting in chari-

ty and munificence, the author having in his mind, probably, the poor laws of England and our own, which in many, perhaps, in all the States of the Union are based upon the same principle, though not so complex or so difficult to administer as in England. Now the poor laws in ancient Peru, might have been well adapted to the state of things there, but would not work well or work at all, in any civilized country at present. But what surprises me, is the view taken of the subject by Mr. Prescott, and the insinuation that certain existing governments are "frozen" unfeeling and uncharitable. These cannot be our own, certainly, where all is given that is needed, and all that is asked. Nor can it be England, where more is given by law, in charity than in any other country under Heaven—where 15 millions of people pay annually in support of the poor, from 35 to 40 millions of dollars, and where the very poor laws themselves, by their indiscriminating and unstinting liberality have created without doubt, not less, numerically, than one-half of the paupers—a fact in political economy, to which Mr. Prescott would not yield his assent I suppose, judging from what he says about "frozen reservoirs"; but if he will carefully examine and compare the condition of the poor in England, and their condition in Scotland, and the poor law system of both countries, his present opinions, as I take them to be, will at least be shaken I think.

The state of society in ancient Peru, bore a pretty strong resemblance to *Communism*, so much talked and written about in Europe—a thing utterly impracticable on a large scale with existing ideas of civilization and undesirable if it were not. Where Communism begins, human progress must stop, because its principles are antagonistic to advancement—not in theory it is true, but would be inevitably in practice, because it proscribes almost all the sentiments and passions that make man a progressive animal—love of distinction, of independence, of ease, of wealth, &c., &c.

In Peru, the Inca was the chief or superintendent of the community, being bound to provide for all, but being at the same time master of all—of the soil and of every thing on it—men, women and children included. Modern Communism contemplates it is true, no individual superiority and supremacy like this. It recognizes no superiors and no inferiors, but a kind of Arcadian equality and felicity, where every man will be his own master, or if not

that, at least the member of a community that will have but one mind, one interest, one object—that object being the happiness of all—a very desirable state of things truly, and if realized, we might reasonably expect to attain with time and perseverance, to the enviable condition of the beavers and prairie dogs.

Page 61.—“The roads (in ancient Peru) are said to have been so nicely constructed, that a carriage might have rolled over them as securely as on any of the great roads of Europe.”

Some of the great high-ways in ancient Peru were wonderful works certainly, considering when and how, and by whom they were made; and this being admitted, eulogy must stop. In point of beauty, solidity and durability, they were much inferior to the ancient Roman high-ways, and to the modern European or American Macadamized roads, as regards convenience and safety. But the Peruvian roads were as good as were needed, as there were no wheel-carriages to roll over them, and no beast of burden to travel over them, except the *llama*, not much larger than a large sheep, whose burden was never more than one hundred pounds.

Page 118.—“They [the Quipus] sometimes, also, stood for abstract ideas.”—P. 120.—“Representation of abstract ideas to a very limited extent.”

Doctor ROBERTSON, in his *America*, says: “But as by knots, (quipus) however varied or combined, no moral or abstract idea, no operation or quality of the mind could be represented, they contributed little towards preserving the memory of ancient events and institutions.”

Here is a seeming contradiction between those two eminent historians. It seems to be only, though, for in fact it is not. Mr. PRESCOTT means nothing more than the *quipus* represented abstract ideas to a limited and conventional extent, as for instance, it being understood that a particular color should, when used in a certain way, represent a particular idea, as that *white* should stand for *peace*, then the abstract idea of peace was represented. This amounted to little or nothing, and bore no resemblance, whatever, to alphabetic writing, which Dr. ROBERTSON being less copious and descriptive than Mr. PRESCOTT, did not notice very particularly.

Page 124.—“The beautiful Quichua dialect, the most comprehensive and various, as well as the most elegant of the South American dialects.”

This the author says, on the authority of ONDEGAARDO, an early emigrant to Peru, who could only have been guessing at what he said about the Quichua language, for there must have been at least one hundred South American dialects of which, he had never even heard. I doubt whether the Quichua was the most beautiful or most comprehensive, or most elegant of those dialects. Judging from the imperfect lights we have, I think it probable, that it was not in any manner superior to the Chibcha, the language of the Mozas, in New Granada, who, as well as the Peruvians had made considerable advances towards civilization, and there may be at this day, unknown

living dialects in South America, superior to both—to such an extent, still is that vast country a *terra incognita*; though, there cannot be, I suppose any nation or tribe of aborigines of any consequence, that has not been discovered.

I have heard the Quichua spoken, and did not seem to me to be either very euphonious or very elegant, or very forcible. It is simple in its construction, and having but one declension for all nouns, and but one conjugation for all verbs, and being without the multitudinous rules and the multitudinous exceptions to them, characteristic of almost all languages, and so annoying, it is not difficult of attainment. Here are specimens of it, which may give an idea of the language, though, an imperfect one, for the words were first spelt according to the Spanish orthography, and are done now into the English, by myself. Also, I will remark, that there never has been compiled, either a correct Quichua grammar or vocabulary. The following are numerals:—*ook* (1) *yokeye* (2) *kekmsah* (3) *tahwah* (4) *peechah* (5) *soketah* (6) *cabnahees* (7) *poosac* (8) *eescone* (9) *chooncah* (10) *yokeyechooncah* (20) *keemachooncah* (30) *eesconchooncah* (90) *pachac* (100) *wahrankah* (1000)

*Oookpachoolleentah pphachawtah Uahmaniah eemah ikelantapas swahpookchookankes eemac-tam kwankee.*

Translation.—Have you stolen money or clothes, or sheep or any other thing? What is it that you have stolen?

This is one of many questions propounded by the priest to an Indian at the confession, and as it is according to a prescribed formula, we may infer, that the Indians may have been somewhat addicted to appropriating without warrant, the articles enumerated in the interrogatory, as well as other articles.

According to CARROS, the Quichua language wants the letters B, D, F, G, R, and Z. But in the vocabulary compiled by the Jesuits, RUSSO and FIGUEROA, at Lima, in 1754, the R is used and J, the Spanish *hota* omitted, which of course confuses the orthography.

Page 138.—“Yet, though the temperature changes in this region (South America) with the degree of elevation, it remains nearly the same in the same spots throughout the year, and the inhabitant feels none of those grateful vicissitudes of season, which belong to the temperate latitudes of the globe.”

This may be said of nearly all South America within the tropics, but there are exceptions; and Peru is one of them. Along the coast of that country the vicissitudes of season are very sensibly felt. At Lima, there are thirty degrees between extreme heat and extreme cold, it being oppressively warm sometimes in the summer, (our winter) and uncomfortably cold in the winter, the mercury falling to 60, 58 and 56 degrees of Fahrenheit. This is not the case on the Atlantic side of the continent, in the corresponding degrees of latitude, where it is always hot on the coast, the temperature not being modified and mollified there, as it is on the western side, by the cool breezes that blow almost constantly from towards the south pole.



Page 140.—Describing the coca leaf so much chewed by the Indians, in Peru, Mr. PRZECOTT calls it a "weed," and the "loved narcotic" of the Indian, which, "when used to excess, is said to be attended with all the effects of habitual intoxication."

For this, Mr. PRZECOTT quotes PÆRRIG, and adds in a note,—"strange that such baneful propensities should not be the subject of more frequent comment with other writers. I do not remember to have seen them even adverted to." And no wonder that he has not for they do not exist. PÆRRIG was a learned, credulous, speculative, imaginative German, whose account of Peru, however, is interesting. He was a pretty shrewd and accurate observer in general, but the intoxicating, deleterious properties ascribed by him to the coca leaf, are almost wholly imaginary. The coca plant is a shrub and not a "weed." The leaf contains a considerable portion of mucilage, which is swallowed by the chewer, who derives some nutriment from it. It is chewed incessantly and excessively by thousands who are neither better nor worse for the chewing, which is more than he said of that detestable "weed," tobacco, which was never intended by nature to be eaten by anything else than tobacco worms.

PÆRRIG was credulous—disliked the Peruvians, whom he charges with shallowness and frivolity [*flachheit und frivolität*] and was generally in a humor to find fault with them and their country. But it is not more surprising that he should have fallen into mistakes about the coca, as it is that the editors or compilers of the Penny Cyclopaedia should have incorporated his account of it into their work *verbatim et litteratim* I believe, and should not even have mentioned Doctor UMANUE's description of it, which is long, elaborate and satisfactory, the author being a Peruvian, learned and scientific for the country and the time. He flourished at Lima, forty years ago, and his essay on the coca, is to be found in the *Mercurio Peruano*, a periodical of considerable merit, all things considered.

Page 152.—"But that they (the Peruvians) should have shewn the like facility in cutting the hardest substances, as emeralds and other precious stones, is not so easy to explain."

It may be explained without difficulty I think, and the solution is, that time was not of much value to the Peruvian artisan, and that he could afford to devote a month or two to the doing of what a modern mechanic would execute in a day or in an hour perhaps. A continual dripping will wear away a stone and so will continual friction, although that stone be an emerald or a diamond even. I have seen emeralds, the work of the ancient Peruvians, perfectly polished, but it appeared to me that it could not have been done otherwise than by a tedious process.

Page 166.—"Was it not (the Peruvian Government) as we have said, the most oppressive, though the mildest of despotisms?"

"Most searching" Mr. PRZECOTT says, in the passage to which he refers, as I suppose—page 115. I do not understand how the most oppressive of despotisms could have been the mildest, or how the most searching could be, for all searching governments are more or less

oppressive. Had Mr. PRZECOTT used the word *absolute*, his meaning would have been clearer.

Doctor ROBERTSON says, "the dominion of the Incas, though the most absolute of all despotisms, was mitigated by its alliance with religion."

The alliance cannot be questioned, but I doubt the mitigation. The Doctor maintains his theory pretty ably and very plausibly; but for my own part I am inclined to believe that the 'alliance' subjected the poor Peruvian to two despotisms instead of one—civil and ecclesiastical. This is the case all over the world, where church and state are united, and when the head of the state governs the consciences, as well as the bodies of his subjects. Let us hear another high authority upon this subject, Baron HUMBOLDT, who says that "the founder of the empire of Cuzco, (MANCO CAPAC) in flattering himself that he could force men to be happy, had reduced them to the condition of simple machines"—(*à l'état de simples machines*.)

Page 166.—Mr. PRZECOTT says in a note—"SENECA's well known prediction in his *Medea*, is perhaps, the most remarkable random prophecy on record.

quibus oceanus  
Vincula rerum laxet et ingens  
Patent tellus Typhusque Novos  
Detegat Orbis.

It was the lucky hit of the philosopher rather than of the poet."

It seems to me, that considering the state of science in general, and of geographical science in particular, at the time SENEOA wrote his "prophecy," it was much more probably, a flight of the poet's imagination than a philosophical speculation.

Page 194.—"The startling intelligence, that BALBOA achieved the formidable adventure of scaling the mountain rampart of the Isthmus, which divides the two mighty oceans from each other."

This adventure was far less formidable than many others that were achieved in those days, without exciting much surprise. In the Isthmus, the mountains are but hills, of no great elevation and easily scaled, and the distance across is not more than 70 or 80 miles at most—least distance from 40 to 50. BALBOA's good fortune in discovering the Pacific ocean, was what gave lustre and glory to the adventure, and not the scaling of the 'mountain rampart.'

Page 198.—"This most unhealthy spot, (Panama) the cemetery of many an unfortunate colonist," &c.

Panama is not a healthy place, but it is much more so than some other places; more so than Chagres and Portobello on the Atlantic, not far off, or than New Orleans. To call it most unhealthy is being rather severe. It is one of the most beautiful sites for a city in the whole world, not excepting Constantinople or Naples, or Washington.

Page 224.—"But soon returning with admirable ferocity to the charge they singled out PIZARRO, &c."

"Admirable ferocity," is rather an unusual phrase I think. Is ferocity the subject of admiration? It seems to me, that any thing that is admirable must be in some manner com-

commendable—so far as to challenge our approbation, at least. Admirable courage is correct, but I doubt of admirable ferocity.

This is verbal criticism, which I hold rather cheap, and dip into it only from a desire to see so *admirable* a history as the *Conquest*, as perfect as possible, in manner as well as in matter.

Page 248.—“Monkeys chattered in crowds above their heads, and made grimaces like the fiendish spirits of these solitudes.”—“Here was seen the gigantic boa coiling his unwieldy form about the trees, &c.”

HERRERA is quoted for this, and he says, there were many monkeys, but says nothing about their grimaces or about fiendish spirits. He says, there were frightful snakes too [*espectosos culebras*] in that region, but does not say that there were any boas, and there were none I think. It is a very snakey country, but the boa is not found there, though he is to be met with in South America, from thirty to thirty-five feet in length, perhaps.

HERRERA was pretty good at a snake story, although he does not support Mr. PRESCOTT, when the latter locates the boa in PIZARRO's path. He tells of snakes that had mouths at their tails, of a red one with eight feet that shines in the dark, and of another that had the head of a boy with the eyes of a calf, and of one, on which eighteen Spaniards seated themselves, taking it for the trunk of a tree.

But of all the snake stories extant, the best I think is told by CALANCHA, and in perfect good faith. He says that in Paraguay, there is a huge serpent that swallows alligator's eggs whole, but that they must be crushed before they can be digested: to effect which, his snakeship coils himself round a tree, using the necessary degree of force, and the eggs, as they are crushed, make reports like muskets.—This is not easily beaten.

A word on behalf of the monkeys. I think Mr. PRESCOTT makes them out to be rather worse than they are. I have seen trees full of them in South America, but it did not occur to me that they looked like fiendish spirits. I have seen too, rooms full of them at the Zoological Gardens in London, and, though they were riotous with fun and frolic and mischief, they had neither the bearing nor the aspect of fiends.

Page 384.—“The adventurers now behold only the great bird of the Andes, the loathsome Condor, &c.”

I do not know upon what authority Mr. PRESCOTT applies the epithet *loathsome*, to this bird, which he certainly does not deserve. He is nothing more nor less than a great vulture, with nothing loathsome in his appearance, habits or character, and he is distinguished for being the bird, that of all the feathered tribe, soars the highest in the heavens, not excepting the eagle, that, although, his “flight is out of sight,” as the primer says, does not, dares not attempt such lofty flights as the condor. Mr. PRESCOTT does him injustice, when he pronounces him to be loathsome, as he pronounces the alligator to be with much greater propriety. Baron HUMBOLDT, who was well acquainted with him, and because acquainted with him in the Andes, his country and his home, does not speak of him so disparagingly, but

rather in terms of respect and admiration. The worst that can be said of him is, that he feeds sometimes on carrion when he cannot do better, and the same may be said of the “lord of creation” man, the “paragon of animals,” when acting under the same law—necessity; and he even does worse than this, for if hard pushed he does not hesitate to make a meal of his fellow-man, and I doubt whether the condor, under any circumstances, would prey upon a bird of the same feather.

Page 389.—“It was obviously not his (ATA-HUALUPA's) cue to manifest suspicion.”

The word *cue* is too trivial I think, for the gravity of the subject:—*Polsey* would be better.

Page 390.—“Along the slope of the hills, a white cloud of pavilions was seen covering the ground, as thick as snow-flakes, for the space, apparently of several miles.”

This white cloud of pavilions was the tents of the Peruvian army.—This is rather oriental, and sounds too much like some of the descriptions in the *Thousand and One*. Mr. PRESCOTT means of course to convey no other idea than that there was a vast number of tents, but the figure he employs is a little hyperbolic, for it is very certain that the pavilions were neither as numerous as snow-flakes nor as white, nor in any manner resembling them.

Page 407.—“Seemed to be contrived on purpose for a *coup de theatre*.”

I do not think that the French phrase *coup de theatre* is happily used here. Another form might easily have been given to the sentence, and the meaning as perfectly and as much more intelligibly expressed. These words convey the idea of a *stage trick*, which is nearly a literal translation of them, and are not to my mind in keeping with the solemnity of the subject or of the generally pure style of the author.

Vol. ii. page 4.—“Manco then pledged the Spanish commander in a golden goblet of sparkling *chicha*.”

True of the goblet without doubt. Gold it was, and pure gold beyond all question, but the sparkling *chicha* is a little poetical. Burgundy sparkles, not *chicha*, which is nothing more than a very primitive and uninviting beverage, concocted from fermented Indian corn, which is strong enough to intoxicate and to stupify, but scarcely capable of exhilarating. This is the genus. There are many varieties of this *wine of the country*, (*vino del pais*), as it is called in some parts of South America, made of various kinds of fruit, and named accordingly, and is more or less palatable.

Page 8.—“The effort to Christianize the heathen is an honorable characteristic of the Spanish conquest.”

That an author of Mr. PRESCOTT's learning, ability, acuteness, and judgment, should call the incorporating of the “heathen” into the Roman Catholic church “christianizing,” is to me a paradox. To Christianize the Indians, as he calls it, was of all others the most effectual method of riveting upon them the chains of slavery, and until this was done their subjugation was not complete. Kingcraft and priestcraft went hand in hand, or the latter was an auxiliary rather to the former. When the work was done, and the poor heathen transformed

into a Christian, he found himself a slave with three or four masters—the home government at Madrid, the government of the colony, the *encomendero* or proprietor, and last, not least, the curate of the parish, who was the most annoying and most exacting of the whole. And such Christians! Of the many millions that have been baptized, I am clear in the belief that not one in a thousand have either understood or have been capable of understanding the dogmas of the Christian religion as explained by the Spanish propagandists. I say baptized, because merely to administer the ordinance of baptism was the process by which they were made members of the holy Roman Catholic Apostolical church.

Ulloa, Humboldt, and others let us into this secret of christianizing, as it is called, and now and then an honest missionary makes a disclosure that throws some light upon the farce. DOMITZHOFFER, for instance, who says that others receive the faith by the ears, but that the Indian receives it by the mouth; that he is a Christian while you are feeding him, but cease to feed and he returns to his idols, saying that as he gains nothing by being a Christian, he will go back to his own gods. D. speaks of such as were christianized by missionary efforts, not of those who were converted by fire and sword, and by all sorts of force, and by all sorts of fraud. A fact is related by Archbishop Mojo in his *Mexican Letters*, written in 1805, which demonstrates how uncertain and ineffectual was this christianizing process. To every body's astonishment it was discovered in 1803 that the inhabitants of an Indian village only four or five leagues from the city of Mexico, with the exception of five or six persons, were arrant and inveterate heathens, worshipping as they worshipped in the time of Montezuma, having for the period of 280 years deceived the whole world, as well as their own Roman Catholic curates, by conforming outwardly to the form of Christian worship, but tenaciously adhering to their idolatrous rites in secret. This seems to be almost incredible, but it is nevertheless true, without doubt, as every one who will read the archbishop's lengthy and circumstantial narrative will at once see and admit.

Page 114.—“The Araucana (Ercilla's poem) may claim the merit indeed—if it be a merit—of combining both romance and history in one. It is a military journal done into rhyme.”

If by these remarks it was the author's intention to disparage the *Araucana*, then I must say, notwithstanding my deference for his taste and judgment, that he does injustice to one of the finest epic poems to be found in any language. It may have defects—has, no doubt; but what poem of any considerable length has not? Is the *Iliad* perfect, or the *Æneid*, or *Paradise Lost*? No critic asserts that I believe for even *quandoque bonus dormitat Homerus*, as a very able one has said.

A military journal done into rhyme? Be it so; but it is such rhyme as not many poets have written. And it combines both romance and history in one!—a questionable merit, according to Mr. Prescott. But this is precisely what may be said, to some extent, I fancy, of every readable epic ever written, not

excepting *Paradise Lost*, and Dante's *Divina Commedia*, in which so much is described that it is assumed to have taken place in the two invisible worlds—the world above and the world below, and in the visible one.

Certain Spanish critics have underrated the *Araucana*. But this proves nothing. French critics have said that Corneille and Racine were not great poets, as English critics have said that Milton and Pope were not; but these judgments have not been ratified by the reading public, either in Spain, or France, or England. Cervantes praises the *Araucana*, and he was a better judge of its merit than those who saw none in it.

Ercilla was under thirty years of age when he wrote his poem, (the *Araucana*;) was a soldier and a brave and an able one; would fight a battle one day, and record it the next on any scrap of paper he could find, or for want of paper on a scrap of leather, in rhyme that would lose nothing by a comparison with the *Iliad*, had it been written in ancient Greek, instead of modern Spanish.

Page 14.—Mr. Prescott describes the volcano of Cotopaxi, as “spouting forth cataclysms of lava that have overwhelmed towns and villages in their career, and shaking the earth with subterranean thunders that at the distance of more than a hundred leagues sounded like reports of artillery.”

I do not think that any towns or villages have been overwhelmed by the lava from Cotopaxi, but they have been without doubt by the inundations caused by the sudden melting of the snows on that mountain by the subterranean heat, the waters finding an outlet through a verdant and smiling valley south of the volcano, and commencing immediately at its base. In this valley there are several villages and a town (Latacunga) containing eight or nine thousand inhabitants, which have all been submerged at one time and another, and then all who had not the time or means to flee to the mountains, were swept away by the inexorable and overwhelming flood, and then, as PLINY says, describing an eruption of Mount Vesuvius, *audires ululatus feminarum infan- tium quiritatus, clamores virorum*, &c.

The subterranean thunders are said to have been heard at the distance of two hundred leagues, not measuring the distance, though, by a straight line—so measured, it would not be one hundred, probably.

Pages 23, 24, 25.—There is a little vagueness and a little inaccuracy in Mr. Prescott's description of the city of Lima. The Rimac cannot be said to be a “broad stream” in a country that numbers among its rivers the Orinoko, the Amazon, and the La Plata. It is not broad even when swollen by the periodical rains in the Andes—never navigable for any kind of craft, and in the dry season, as regards volume of water, is not very greatly ahead of the celebrated stream that flows through the federal metropolis, now rejoicing in the classic name of Tiber; why so called I know not, and the why and wherefore of this Roman appellation may be a puzzle for the antiquary a thousand or two years hence.

There is no “commodious haven” at the

mouth of the Rimac, the port for Lima being at Callao, a mile or two further south.

"The climate was delightful." There is some difference of opinion about this. It is delightful a part of the year, and a part certainly not. The undelightful portion is what they call the winter—our summer. It is then damp, chilly, cloudy, gloomy and uncomfortable. Nor is Lima a healthy place, but it is not remarkably unhealthy either. It is infested with fleas and musquitoes—one or the other being always present, both periodically—plagues from the visitation of which Pharaoh was mercifully spared.

I have no intention, however, of maligning the *City of the Kings*, as it is often called. *Audi alteram partem*—hear the other side—is a sound and safe maxim, and in willing conformity to it I state with all cheerfulness and impartiality, that Lima has often been pronounced to be one of the most enchanting spots in the world—a sort of terrestrial paradise, and though terrestrial, not without one feature of MAHOMET'S Heaven, the black-eyed Houri. It has been panegyricized in all sorts of prose and in all sorts of poetry, and in various languages, the learned not excepted, for VANNERIUS has written a Latin poem in its praise, which is not without merit, though an amusing mixture of fiction and of fact. I quote a few lines:

Perpetuo cives ibi vere fruuntur et annus  
Labitur usque sui similis —————  
totumque per annum  
Nullus ab innubi licet æthere decidat imber.

Here we have perpetual spring—*perpetuo vere*—a cloudless sky—*innubi æthere*—and no rain—*nullus imber*. But it seems to me to be making a little free with the *licentia poetica*, to say or sing, that at Lima it is perpetual spring where, during two months of the year the whole world complains of the heat and of the dust, which united makes one think at least of suffocation—where during two or three other months they go shivering about, wrapped up in heavy woollen cloaks, and where, during a quarter of the year the "cloudless sky" is obscured by dense murky lowering clouds, scarcely a momentary glimpse of the sun being had sometimes for several days at a time. But nevertheless the Limanians are enthusiastic in praise of their climate, believing it to be just what it should be, favorable to health, to longevity, to the occupations of those engaged in business, and to the votaries of pleasure.

It is but proper that I should say too, that not all who have written about Lima and the Limanians have written in their commendation. FRESIER, a Frenchman, who visited Peru 175 years ago, says many bitter things of them, and TERALLA, a Spaniard or Mexican, who wrote a satirical poem which he called *Lima, Inside and Outside*, is mercilessly sarcastic and vituperative, beating Juvenal's famous 10th. But his exaggerations about most matters are too palpable to gain credence.

"It never rained on the coast." This is not strictly accurate. It does rain occasionally—now and then. "The vaporous cloud that hangs over the valley during the summer months"—the winter months at Lima—dis-

charges its humidity in a shape very much resembling rain sometimes, or Scotch mist, at least. It often penetrates through the roofs of the houses at Lima, and makes the streets very muddy.

According to Doctor UNANUE, who wrote a work on the climate of Lima, it rained on the coast, in the year of 1710-'20-'28 and '31, not only copiously, but so abundantly as to ruin the crops and carry away houses. These were floods, but there were rains without doubt, between those periods at irregular intervals.

Peru is a singular country as regards wood and water. Rain does not fall as it does every where else on the continent, I believe, from the sea shore until the Andes are approached, and there is very little wood and never was much probably until the first cordillera or mountain range is passed. Yet in the extreme south of Peru not far from the coast, large trees are found buried at a small distance from the surface of the ground, though there are not now any living trees of the same kind or analogous to them, or of any other kind. Whence came those trees? How long have they been in their present position? What moving accident by land or flood has placed them there? I can ask these questions but cannot answer them, and so I leave the subject, confessing my ignorance.

"The name bestowed on the infant capital was *Ciudad de los Reyes* or the City of the Kings, in honor of the day, being the 6th of January, 1535—the festival of Epiphany—when it was said to have been founded, or more probably when its date was determined as its actual foundation seems to have been twelve days later."

In my opinion neither the naming nor the founding of Lima had any reference to the Epiphany. According to what I conceive to be the best authority it was founded, as Mr. PRESCOTT supposes, on the 18th of January, and was called *Ciudad de los Reyes*, not in honor of the Wise Men from the East, but in honor of the emperor CHARLES THE 5TH and of his mother queen JUANA, and should be translated therefore *City of the Sovereigns*—not *Kings*, which is contrary to the English idiom, one being a female.

"Their foundations (the public buildings) were laid on a scale and with a solidity which defied the assaults of time."

Nothing mortal and material defies the assaults of time—certainly not the churches at Lima. Solid as are their foundations, a severe earthquake would in an instant make them a mass of ruins. The Pyramids themselves do not defy the assaults of time, for the time will come that antiquaries will speculate and dispute about their sites even.

"Not a pinch of dust remains of Cheops," LORD BYRON says, and not a pinch will remain of those vast structures, which being not the monuments of a great and happy people, but of a despotic and oppressive government, cannot disappear too soon. SANDYS who saw them in 1610, calls them "barbarous monuments of prodigality and vain glory"—a just sentiment and he might have added, of despotism.

Page 196.—“Pizarro was but an adventurer, a fortunate Knight Errant—his success was good fortune rather than the result of policy”—“was eminently perfidious.”

In this page the author institutes a comparison between CORTÉZ and PIZARRO much to the disadvantage of the latter. CORTÉZ was, he says, a “great captain,” the other but a bold adventurer. In my opinion there is nothing in the history of these two remarkable men, that warrants the placing of CORTÉZ so unapproachably above and beyond PIZARRO. I have read a great deal about them both, and it seems to me that with the exception that CORTÉZ was the most educated man, there have never lived two men perhaps who more resembled each other in their characters and conduct and whose career after reaching this continent was so nearly identical, except that PIZARRO came to a violent end and the other died quietly in his bed—quietly, if the innocent blood that was on his soul suffered him so to die, which may be doubted, for BERNAL DIAZ says that, after the taking off of GUATEMOSIN; CORTÉZ was gloomy and thoughtful, which he thinks may have been in consequence of his putting that prince to death without a trial.

In all that he planned and that he performed, CORTÉZ gave no higher proof of his ability and fitness for command than PIZARRO did, and he had not to encounter half the difficulties in his march from the sea coast to the city of Mexico that PIZARRO encountered in his expedition from Panama to Peru. They were both perfidious and both cruel. The seizure of Atahualpa was not more perfidious than the conduct of CORTÉZ towards MONTEZUMA, nor was the slaying of the former a whit more atrocious than the murder of GUATEMOSIN—less so, if the character of the victim could be taken into account, for the Spaniards themselves admit that GUATEMOSIN was one of the noblest natives that ever lived, whilst the Peruvian prince we are obliged to suppose, after making due allowance for the exaggerations of the Spanish chroniclers, was a usurper and tyrant. And bloody and unsparing as PIZARRO was there is nothing laid to his charge half so enormous as the torturing by fire of GUATEMOSIN to compel him to discover hidden treasures, of which atrocity the guilt and the responsibility justly belonged to CORTÉZ; and of which he seemed to be a little ashamed after the prince's minister had been roasted to death without making any disclosure, and it was evident that his master would make none.

Page 198.—“Pizarro was no bigot, like CORTÉZ. It was his (C's) great purpose to purify the land from the brutish abominations of the Aztecs, by substituting the religion of Jesus.”

Herein I differ widely from Mr. PRESCOTT, presumptuous as it may seem to be and as it is, for me to do so. In so far as PIZARRO was free from the bigotry and fanaticism of CORTÉZ, to that extent was he *me judice*, a better man. “The brutish abominations of the Aztecs” were no worse nor as bad as the abominations of the Holy Inquisition. The Mexican priest with his sacrificial knife was more merciful than the Spanish Inquisitor with his racks and

dungeons and torments. The former despatched his victim at once; the latter made him die a thousand deaths before finally consigning him to the flames. And what made the ‘abominations’ of the latter still more abominable, was that the victim was often a man of irreproachable conduct and character, a sincere and exemplary christian, the fellow subject of his oppressor and murderer, and, perhaps, his neighbor and friend.

The “great purpose” of CORTÉZ was not, as Mr. PRESCOTT in the exercise, a very large charity supposes, to “purify the land,” but to conquer, kill, plunder and enslave. MONTEZUMA, who well knew how to appreciate his character, conduct and religion, says of him and his associates—“these robbers, who wished to be robbers and christians at the same time, were very devout.” (*Ces brigands qui voulaient absolument être brigands et chrétiens étaient très dévots.*) *Epprit Le Lolo.* They were precisely what the poet MONTGOMERY describes them to be:—

A rabid race, fanatically bold,  
And steel'd to cruelty by lust of gold,  
Travers'd the waves, the unknown world explor'd,  
The cross, their standard, but their faith the sword:  
Their steps were graves; o'er prostrate realms they trod;  
They worshipp'd Mammon while they vow'd to God.

Page 258.—Mr. PRESCOTT informs us that young ALMAGRO was executed “on the same spot where his father had suffered, but a few years before.”

This is inaccurate. The father, as Mr. PRESCOTT, himself, tells us, was put to death in prison, and afterwards decapitated in the public square. It cannot be said, therefore, that he ‘suffered’ there, as the son did.

Page 266.—“The tidings flew like wildfire over the land.”

The word *wildfire* is too common and colloquial, I think, to be so used by an author so chaste and eloquent in his style as Mr. PRESCOTT. What is wildfire, and how fast does it fly? Is it the combustible compound known as Greek fire, about which marvellous tales are told, or what? Sir WALTER SCOTT says in some of his novels, “the infection caught like a quick match, and ran like wildfire,” which is a metaphor that does well enough in a romance or in a light narrative, but it is I conceive, beneath the dignity of history.

Page 320.—“Like the wild huntsman of Bürger.” Certain it is I think that many who read with pleasure the “Conquest of Peru,” have never heard of this huntsman, whom to know it is necessary to know something about German literature, which, unfortunately, is but little cultivated in this country, except by the Germans. Allusions to obscure legends, or to those not obscure in the context of a serious and formal history, if not absolutely necessary for illustration, had better be avoided.

Page 378.—“The doughty old warrior.” This is said of CARVAJAL. It is long I think since the word *doughty* has been used, unless ironically and in burlesque by elegant

writers. Mr. PRÆSCOTT has used it, however, in the original sense in all his historical works, I believe, and such a sanction is enough, perhaps, to legitimate it. CARVAJAL was any thing but a doughty warrior, as the phrase would be understood by every body, were it not for the clearness of the context. He was one of the best and bravest of soldiers, fearless and faithful, but in other respects not over-good.

Page 372.—“The silver soil of Peru.”

This is rather too bold a figure. ‘The soil of Peru is not silvery, or argentiferous, to use a more learned word. The silver is found generally in combination with hard rock, and requires infinite pounding and grinding to prepare it for amalgamation with mercury. The soil, though, is auriferous in some places in South America, and gold in small quantities can be obtained from the earth in those places, but it does not pay well for the labor of extracting it, unless when washed by the rains from the auriferous mountains, and then it is obtained by the process called *washing*.

Pages 289—379. Mr. PRÆSCOTT frequently makes mention of the city of Arequipa as a seaport. At page 289, he says that GONZALO PIZARRO caused galleys to be built there “to secure the command of the seas.”

Arequipa is not a seaport and never was. It is not less than eighty miles by the road from the sea—stands nearly eight thousand feet above the level of it, and not connected with it by any thing like a navigable river. Why then galleys were built there I do not understand. Islay is the port to Arequipa.

Page 416.—In this page the author says that GONZALO PIZARRO’s army “had been schooled by the strictest *martinet* in the Peruvian service.” This *martinet* was that “doughty old warrior,” CARVAJAL. But this word as now understood by military men, cannot be well applied to him. He was a strict disciplinarian, severe to cruelty, but not a *martinet*,

whose pride and glory it is to be rigid and exacting, and annoying about matters of minor or of no importance. Such was not CARVAJAL, whose object in enforcing a severe discipline was to teach his soldiers to obey implicitly and to fight valiantly.

I will here conclude my critique, remarking that I regard it as somewhat a defect in the *Conquest* that there is such a vast amount of untranslated Spanish quoted, with quotations from other foreign languages. This is unnecessary; is tantalizing at all times, and sometimes provoking to the mere English reader. To understand and to relish the work fully—every part and parcel of it—one must be acquainted with four or five languages, which not more than one out of a hundred readers is, perhaps, and yet many that are not, and who know no language but their vernacular, are without doubt not the least qualified to comprehend and to relish the beauties of the narrative. I think, therefore, to quote less and to translate the quotations, would be an improvement.

After all, though, were there a hundred inaccuracies, if they are such, where there is not now more than one, still the *Conquest of Peru* would be an historical work of great merit, having no compeer or competitor, when the circumstances under which it was composed are considered, which are, that the author was suffering during the progress of it from an affection of the eyes, which came so near depriving him entirely of his sight, that all vision was a stranger to him, except for about an hour daily, and then it was very imperfect; and yet he has produced a narrative that challenges the admiration of all—the learned, the unlearned, the critical and the non-critical. This proves, were proof necessary, that he must be not only a writer of great industry, but one possessing much genius and very extraordinary mental powers.



In the foregoing pages there are some typographical errors; the following are the principal ones:

Page 8. Column 1, 3rd line from top—for understood, read *undertaken*.

- |     |   |                         |   |        |   |
|-----|---|-------------------------|---|--------|---|
| 8.  | " | 2, 8th                  | " | "      | —for 2nd and, read <i>or</i> .              |
| 10. | " | 2, 7th                  | " | "      | —for miles, read <i>leagues</i> .           |
| 17. | " | 1, 4th line from bottom |   |        | —for their, read <i>there</i> .             |
| 18. | " | 2, 15th                 | " |        | top—for they, read <i>it</i> .              |
| 24. | " | 1, 26th                 | " | "      | —for it is true, read <i>Is it true?</i>    |
| 29. | " | 2, 12th                 | " | "      | —for more, read <i>most</i> .               |
| 30. | " | 1, 35th                 | " | "      | —for cause, read <i>course</i> .            |
| 32. | " | 2, 39th                 | " | "      | —for rare, read <i>rare</i> .               |
| 37. | " | 2, 10th                 | " | "      | —for analysis, read <i>analyses</i> .       |
| 38. | " | 2, 29th                 | " | "      | —for nook, read <i>rock</i> .               |
| 41. | " | 1, 28th                 | " | "      | —for us, read <i>to</i> .                   |
| 42. | " | 2, 17th                 | " | "      | —for good, read <i>great</i> .              |
| 45. | " | 1, 17th                 | " | bottom | —for work, read <i>word</i> .               |
| 47. | " | 2, 17th                 | " | top    | —for than, read <i>to</i> .                 |
| 52. | " | 2, 12th                 | " | "      | —for inconsistent, read <i>inconstant</i> . |

